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Squatters, con-
ed. Montezuma
of the Aztecs
mutilated the
robbers of 1850
Cultivated Indians

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The oil that came
from river some from sea

The Tomato Leaves

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HOUSES IN AMERICA

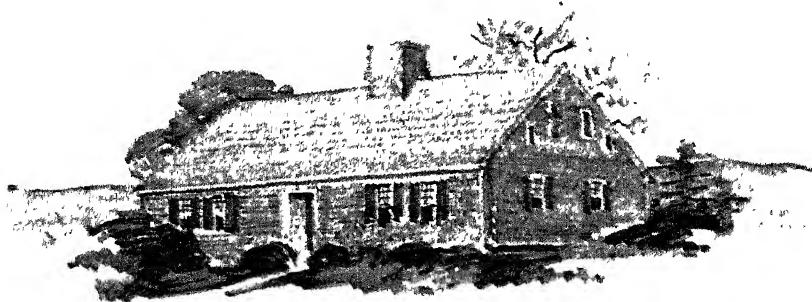
Houses in America

BY

ETHEL FAY ROBINSON

AND

THOMAS P. ROBINSON



WITH MORE THAN 150 ILLUSTRATIONS
THE VIKING PRESS · NEW YORK

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	3
I THE EXPLORERS	6
II THE HOUSES THEY FOUND	9
III EARLY SETTLEMENTS	14
IV THE FIRST SHELTERS	22
V COMMUNITY LIFE	25
VI THE SPANISH COLONIAL TRADITION	28
VII THE FRENCH COLONIAL TRADITION	36
VIII THE DUTCH COLONIAL TRADITION	43
IX THE SWEDISH COLONIAL TRADITION	55
X THE GERMAN COLONIAL TRADITION	60
XI THE ENGLISH COLONIAL TRADITION	69
XII GARRISON HOUSES	76
XIII PLANS	83
XIV CHIMNEYS	87
XV EARLY HOUSES	91
XVI EXAMPLES OF EARLY HOUSES	99
XVII LATER HOUSES	105
XVIII EXAMPLES OF LATER HOUSES	108
XIX STILL LATER HOUSES	119
XX THE FIRST ARCHITECTS	121
XXI ODDS AND ENDS OF LIVING	129
XXII BITS AND SCRAPS	137
XXIII ATTICS	141
XXIV THE LOG CABIN TRADITION	144
XXV APPROPRIATENESS	150
XXVI MATERIALS	153
XXVII WOOD	155
XXVIII WOOD EXAMPLES	165

	PAGE
xxix BRICK	173
xxx BRICK EXAMPLES	181
xxxi STONE	185
xxxii STONE EXAMPLES	191
xxxiii STUCCO	199
xxxiv EXAMPLES OF MIXED MATERIALS	203
xxxv MODERN PLANS	211
xxxvi MODERN HOUSES	219
xxxvii HELPFUL HINTS	228
xxxviii CONCLUSION	233

ILLUSTRATIONS

The illustrations in this book are the work of THOMAS P. ROBINSON

	PAGE
NORTHERN FARMHOUSE	3
ITALIAN FARMHOUSE	5
ADVENTURERS AND EXPLORERS—MAP	7
INDIAN HABITATIONS	10
CLIFF-DWELLERS' PALACE, NEW MEXICO	11
ZUÑI PUEBLOS, NEW MEXICO	13
OLDEST HOUSE IN SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO	14
OLDEST HOUSE IN ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA	14
CHARLOTTE STREET, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA	15
FIRST WOODEN SCHOOLHOUSE, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA	16
OLD CURIOSITY SHOP, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA	17
COURTYARD OF OLD PALACE, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO	19
ENGLISH HUTS	22
SETTLEMENT OF JAMESTOWN, VIRGINIA (OLD PRINT)	23
FIRST SHELTERS, PLYMOUTH COLONY	25
ADOBE BUILDING, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA	28
OLD ADOBE HOUSE, SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA	29
GENERAL SHERMAN'S HEADQUARTERS, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA	30
MISSIONS AT MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA, AND SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS	31
ADOBE HOUSE, SONORA, CALIFORNIA	32
RESIDENCE OF FIRST SPANISH GOVERNOR, NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI	33
BEREND'S RANCH, NEAR SALINAS, CALIFORNIA	34
GARDEN GATE, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA	35
MONTCALM HEADQUARTERS, QUEBEC, CANADA	37
CHÂTEAU DE RAMEZAY, MONTREAL, CANADA	37

	PAGE
SKETCHES FROM FRENCH SOURCES, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA	39
LOUISIANA PLANTATION HOUSE	41
VAN BRUNT HOUSE	43
NEW AMSTERDAM (OLD PRINT)	44
THE STADT HUYS, NEW AMSTERDAM, 1642	45
TERHUNE HOUSE, HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY	46
TRUE DUTCH GABLE	47
BROAD STREET, NEW AMSTERDAM (OLD PRINT)	49
DUTCH HOUSE, 1667	50
BERGEN HOMESTEAD, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK	51
DUTCH WOODEN PUMP	53
LOTT HOUSE, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK	54
SWEDISH LOG CABIN	57
ROBINSON HOUSE, NAAMANS, DELAWARE	58
CALEB PUSEY HOUSE, UPLAND, PENNSYLVANIA	59
MORAVIAN SEMINARY	61
MORAVIAN "SISTERS' HOUSE"	63
KAUFFMAN HOUSE, BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA	64
KNABB HOUSE, BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA	65
OCTAGONAL SCHOOLHOUSE, PENNSYLVANIA	66
WASH HOUSE, PENNSYLVANIA	67
BAKE OVENS, PENNSYLVANIA	67
OLD BARN, PENNSYLVANIA	67
BRICE HOUSE, ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND	69
PAUL REVERE'S PICTURE OF BOSTON IN 1768	71
TULIP HALL, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND	73
VIRGINIA PORCH	74
GARDEN HOUSE, LAUREL, MARYLAND	75
GARRISON HOUSES	77
GARRISON HOUSE, MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS	79
GARRISON HOUSE, DOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE	81
GARRISON HOUSE, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS	81
GARRISON HOUSE, HAVERHILL, MASSACHUSETTS	81

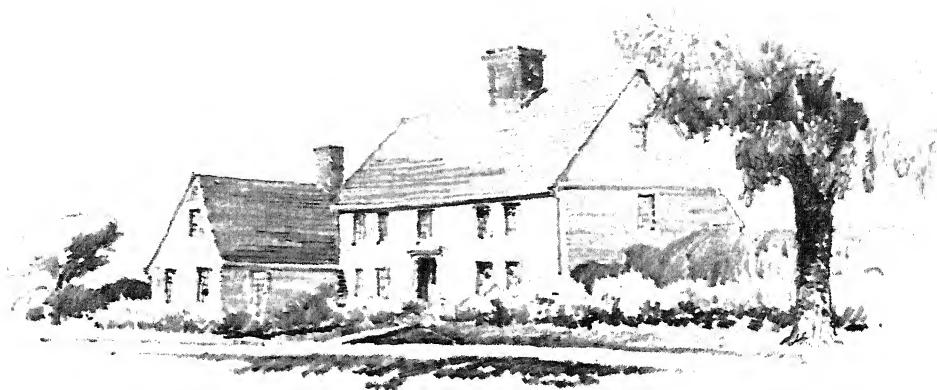
	PAGE
GARRISON HOUSE, ROCK VILLAGE, MASSACHUSETTS	82
DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY FIRST-FLOOR PLAN	85
CHIMNEYS	88, 89
FAIRBANKS HOUSE, DEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS	91
EARLY CONNECTICUT HOUSE	92
EARLY PENNSYLVANIA HALF-TIMBER WORK	92
PARSON CAPEN'S HOUSE, TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS	93
EARLY SOUTHERN VILLAGE HOUSE	94
WILLIAM PENN'S HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA	95
WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA	95
EARLY HOUSE, ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS	95
CONNECTICUT DOORWAY WITH WITCH PANELS	96
CASEMENT WINDOW, NANTUCKET, MASSACHUSETTS	97
CONNECTICUT DOORWAY IN DANBURY MUSEUM	98
MARIA MITCHELL HOUSE, NANTUCKET, MASSACHUSETTS	99
DEAN WINTHROP HOUSE, WINTHROP, MASSACHUSETTS	100
COTTAGE AT MARTHA'S VINEYARD, MASSACHUSETTS	100
PAUL REVERE HOUSE, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS	101
HOUSE OF SEVEN GABLES, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS	101
COUNTRY HOUSES IN CONNECTICUT	102
EARLY TOWN HOUSE	103
SCOTCH IRONWORKS HOUSE, SAUGUS, MASSACHUSETTS	104
HARRINGTON HOUSE, LEXINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS	105
A NEW ENGLAND DOORWAY	107
MOUNT VERNON	108
MACPHRAEDIS-WARNER HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE	110
DOUBLE WOOD HOUSE, NEW ENGLAND TYPE	112
VILLAGE HOUSE, MASSACHUSETTS	113

	PAGE
KING HOOPER MANSION, MARBLEHEAD, MASSACHUSETTS	114
KING HOOPER HOUSE, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS	115
DUMMER MANSION, BYFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS	116
CASEMENT WINDOW, NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE	117
WIGGLESWORTH HOUSE, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS	118
AN ASHUR BENJAMIN HOUSE IN SOUTH HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS	120
DOORWAY, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE	123
ASHUR BENJAMIN PORCH	124
MASSACHUSETTS PORCH AND DOORWAY	126
GIDEON TUCKER HOUSE, SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS	127
ASHUR BENJAMIN DETAIL	128
ICE HOUSE AND SMOKE HOUSE, DELAWARE	130
SMOKE HOUSE, NEW JERSEY	131
DUTCH WELL	133
PUMPS	134
SPRING HOUSE AND SMOKE HOUSE, DELAWARE	135
WELL-HEAD, RHODE ISLAND	136
UPPING BLOCK	138
CATTLE RUN AND COVERED BRIDGE	139
DETAIL FROM LATER HOUSE	140
DANIEL BOONE'S CABIN, KENTUCKY	144
MODERN SOUTH CAROLINA LOG CABIN	145
THOMAS LINCOLN'S SPLIT-LOG CABIN	146
ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BIRTHPLACE, KENTUCKY	147
OLDEST HOUSE IN SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH	147
ALASKAN LOG CABIN OF TODAY	148
WHITE MOUNTAIN HUT	149
SOUTH CAROLINA CABIN	149
OLDEST HOUSE IN DAYTON, OHIO	152
WOOD BLOCKS, VERNON HOUSE, NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND	155
WOOD DETAIL	157

	PAGE
VARIOUS KINDS OF WOOD WALL FINISH	158
ENTRANCE OF LEE MANSION, WOOD BLOCKS	159
DROP DETAILS, WOOD, FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT	160
WOOD DETAILS, CORNER POSTS AND FRAME	161
OLD WIDE CLAPBOARDING	162
CLAPBOARDS AND SHINGLES	163
LEE MANSION, MARBLEHEAD, MASSACHUSETTS	165
PAGE HOUSE, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS	166
LEE-SMITH HOUSE, WISCASSET, MAINE	167
OLD HOUSE NEAR SANDWICH, CAPE COD, MASSACHUSETTS	169
JOHN HOWARD PAYNE HOUSE, LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK	169
TYPICAL MAINE COTTAGE	170
DENNIS, CAPE COD, MASSACHUSETTS	171
MORRIS HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA	172
"HOMewood," MARYLAND	173
FLEMISH BOND	175
DETAIL OF WING, TULIP HALL, MARYLAND	176
CITY HOUSE, NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE	177
BRICK HOUSE, PLASTERED, MARYLAND	179
ENGLISH BOND, STONE QUOINS	180
FAMOUS BRICK HOUSE, WESTOVER, VIRGINIA	181
"STENTON," PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA	183
FAIRFIELD, BRICK WHITEWASHED, VIRGINIA	184
STONE WORK, WINDOW OF BARTRAM HOUSE	186
WINDOW DETAIL, VAN CORTLANDT HOUSE	187
STONE WORK FROM PENNSYLVANIA	189
WHITEFIELD HOUSE, GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT	191
JOHN HANCOCK HOUSE, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS	192
JOHN BARTRAM HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA	193
VAN CORTLANDT HOUSE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK	194

	PAGE
SLAVE QUARTERS, CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA	199
CASTRO HOUSE, SAN JUAN, TEXAS	201
CUSTOM HOUSE, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA	202
SPENCER-PIERCE HOUSE, NEWBURY, MASSACHUSETTS	204
WYCK HOUSE, GERMANTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA	205
ROYALL HOUSE, MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS	207
BRICK AND WOOD HOUSE, ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND	208
SHORT HOUSE, NEWBURY, MASSACHUSETTS	209
TWO-CHIMNEY, STORY-AND-A-HALF COTTAGE	211
MODERN ADAPTATION OF VERY EARLY CENTER CHIMNEY TYPE	213
HIPPED ROOF TWO-STORY WOOD HOUSE	213
STORY-AND-A-HALF GAMBREL HOUSE	213
DUTCH GAMBREL STORY-AND-A-HALF COTTAGE	213
MODERN TWO-STORY HOUSE	214
STUDY FOR CAPE COTTAGE	215
TWO-STORY BRICK SMALL HOUSE	216
DUTCH GAMBREL STORY-AND-A-HALF COTTAGE	217
MODERN ADAPTATION OF TWO-CHIMNEY TYPE TO TWO-STORY TYPE	217
MODERN HOUSE, MOUNT VERNON TYPE	219
MODERN AMERICAN, SHOWING ITALIAN INFLUENCE	220
MODERN AMERICAN, SHOWING ITALIAN INFLUENCE	221
MODERN HOUSE, SPANISH INFLUENCE	222
MODERN PATIO DETAIL	222
MODERN SPANISH HOUSE IN FLORIDA	223
MODERN ADAPTATION OF VERY EARLY TYPE	224
MODERN ADAPTATION OF CAPE COTTAGE TYPE	224
MODERN SUBURBAN HOUSE, LATE COLONIAL TYPE	225
MODERN EXAMPLE OF WEATHERED PINE	226
MODERN SPANISH GATE	227
WHIPPLE HOUSE, IPSWICH, MASSACHUSETTS	228
THE AUTHORS' HOUSE, HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS	232

HOUSES
IN AMERICA



NORTHERN FARMHOUSE

INTRODUCTION

WHEN you build a house, you make a record of yourself, and experts in houses can tell by the house you build and live in what kind of person you are. This is true in some degree of any kind of house, built by any kind of person, of any age. It is true of playhouse or camp, of cottage or mansion.

The story of houses is the story of the people that made them. The history of a country could be written from a study of its houses. It would be a better history than the ones written from a study of wars, because it would tell about people when they were creating things and not when they were destroying them.

Such a history has not yet been written, but the materials that will help to make it are being collected. Men and women have explored and are continuing to explore the regions of the earth where former civilizations have risen and flourished and died. They have revealed

HOUSES IN AMERICA

through excavation and study ancient ways of living which tell much about peoples long forgotten.

In Central America, for instance, a city buried under a forest has been found. A huge city so old that when some of the trees that had grown above the ruins were cut down, the circles on them showed that they had been growing for nine hundred years. Yet after excavations, fourteen large stone buildings with many rooms in good condition were found, buildings of hewn stone that showed a highly skilled people.

Our present purpose doesn't carry us so far afield as this. What we are mostly after is a study of the houses of our own country. What kinds of houses are they? Why are they the kinds they are?

This is important to us because all of them taken together in the light of our country's history create a tradition which is our tradition.

Houses have ancestors just as people have, especially good houses. A good house doesn't boast about its ancestors, it just can't help showing that it has them and who they are or were.

The United States is a democratic country. If it welcomes people of all nationalities, it ought to welcome with them the kinds of houses that they are used to.

Nevertheless it is a fact, that you can't build a Dutch house, or any other kind, that will be the same in all particulars as if it were built in its native country. There are different conditions here, and they must be recognized in building.

The climate is different, probably. If you come from sunny Italy and build a house in Maine, it will have to be adapted to the bleaker atmosphere. The materials you find to build with are different from the stone and stucco of Italy. The men who help you build it are not familiar with Italian arts and crafts—at least the chances are against it. You have to force your own tradition as a graft upon the already well-rooted native stock. If it lives and thrives, you have modified the original tradi-



ITALIAN FARMHOUSE

tion. The two traditions interchange ideas in this and that, and become after many years increasingly a unit.

So it happens with the ideas of building from all the nations whose people have come to America. And sooner or later an American tradition embracing all others will emerge and become the recognized tradition of the country.

CHAPTER I

THE EXPLORERS

THE Norsemen, sailing uncharted through a fog, it is said, discovered this country about the year 1000, and recently it has been asserted that the Irish were ahead of them. However, it was the Italian, Columbus, who started the idea of far adventure. By his own first voyage and safe return, he removed the fear that had hitherto attended it. Once that fear of falling off the edge of a flat earth was gone, the idea of exploring the unknown, deeply implanted in the human race, was quickly seized upon by others. And not alone by the Spanish, who had backed Columbus.

Rumors of his successful voyage spread to other countries. John Cabot, another Italian, set sail from England and reached the coast of Labrador in 1497. His son, Sebastian, followed the next year, and while he was about it, sailed on down the coast.

Ponce de Leon went hunting for the Fountain of Youth in 1512. He expected to find it in a place he named Florida. From the Isthmus of Panama, Balboa looked out on the Pacific Ocean in 1513. He was the first European to do it. Pizarro, who conquered Peru, was with him when he looked. In 1519, Magellan started on his famous voyage. He went through the straits named for him, entered and named the Pacific Ocean, and kept on to the Philippine Islands, but there he died. One ship of his fleet, after a three-year voyage, returned to Spain—the first to sail around the world. During this time, Cortez was foremost in the conquest of Mexico.

Then Narváez, with five vessels built for his expedition and many men of high station, sailed forth for conquest and reached the shore of



Florida. Leaving part of his men with the ships, he marched inland. When they returned, the fine ships were gone. In boats they made themselves, using their shirts for sails, they were shipwrecked near the Mississippi's mouth and Narváez and almost all the rest were drowned. Cabeza de Vaca and four others, after eight years of hardship, finally reached the Spanish settlements on the Pacific, south of the Gulf of California, bringing with them rumors of cities to the north.

Stirred by these and other tales of wealth, in 1540 Coronado marched

HOUSES IN AMERICA

from Mexico City north into what is now eastern Kansas. About this time, De Soto discovered the Mississippi River and Cabrillo, a Portuguese under the Spanish flag, was the first European to sail along the Pacific coast above Lower California. When English Francis Drake followed, and explored the coast beyond, landing near what is now San Francisco, the Indians wanted to keep him for their king.

Meanwhile the French had joined the adventurers. Italians had been the first to sail into the New World for Spain and England, and a fourth, Verrazano, made the first trip for France. In 1524, he cruised from Cape Fear to Rhode Island and New Hampshire, stopping to explore what was then a very lonely New York Harbor.

A few years later, Cartier discovered and named the Gulf of St. Lawrence, its river, and Montreal, while trying to find a northwest passage to India up that river. In 1603, Champlain found himself in the same place on the same mission and in 1609, English Henry Hudson, seeking a short cut to the Orient for Holland, sailed up his own river in the *Half Moon*.

Two years before Hudson landed, Captain John Smith had brought a company of adventurers to Virginia. Later he went here and there on the eastern coast and did a number of things and wrote about them. He made a map of New England, got into trouble with the Indians, and, according to the story, got himself saved by Pocahontas.

Though John Smith's men probably came only to get rich and return to England, they actually started at Jamestown the first permanent English colony. But it was a man's settlement. It didn't get far before 1619, when the London Company sent them ninety young women for wives.

In 1620, the Pilgrims—men, women, and children—sailing round the "Keel Cape" of the Norsemen, started to put Massachusetts on the map of the New World.

CHAPTER II

THE HOUSES THEY FOUND

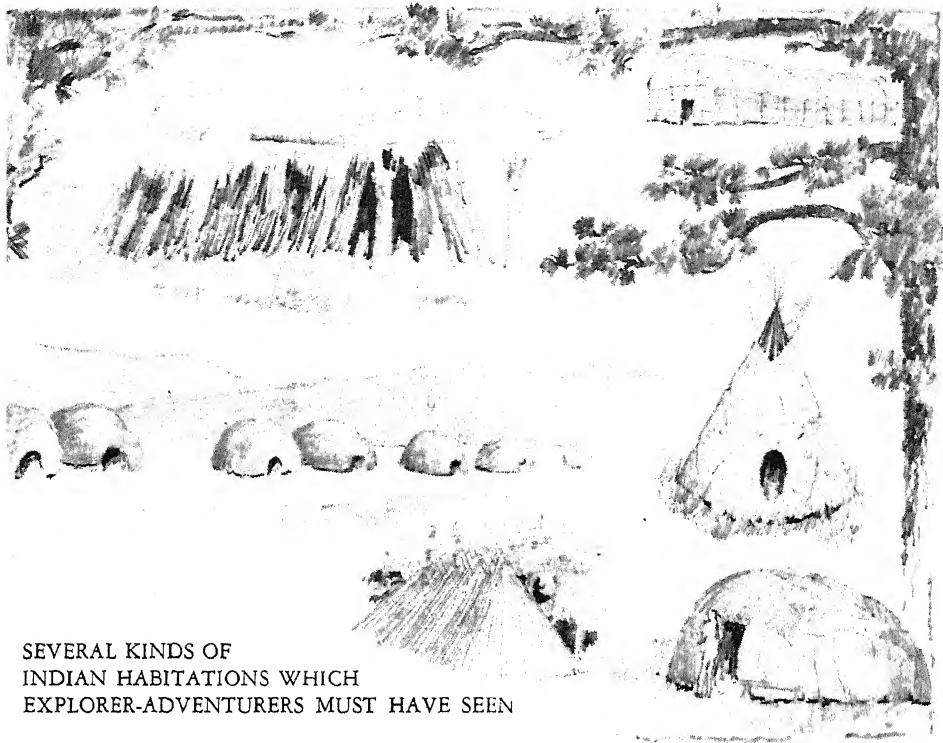
THUS between Columbus's first voyage and the time of the Pilgrims, we see all sorts of people descending like flies upon all parts of the country: Spanish, English, Portuguese, French, Italian, Dutch. They were all looking for gold, adventure, and lands to conquer for their own king or any other king that hired them. Some of them, incidentally, discovered the kinds of houses the natives lived in.

Most of them found only the wigwams of the nomadic tribes, but Cabrillo says he saw brush and mud huts on the coast of California, from which an Indian queen and many of her subjects came to dance with the Spanish sailors.

Laudonnière, the French Huguenot, who built Fort Caroline on the St. John's River, Florida, in 1564, wrote that he found native huts of log and mud. In speaking of the fine Indians who lived in them, he said: "Even Christian whites would not have been kinder to Frenchmen than were these Indians." Soon after, those very Huguenots were butchered by the Spanish.

Champlain discovered among the Iroquois Indians in New York state what were called "long houses." They were made of supple young trees curved over to make a structure like an elongated arbor, to which horizontal poles were fastened. The roof and sides were covered with bark. There were doors at the arbor ends.

Through the center of the building was a passage-way, to right and left of which were separate rooms. Each room was the home of an Indian family, and every four rooms had a place for a fire in the middle



SEVERAL KINDS OF
INDIAN HABITATIONS WHICH
EXPLORER-ADVENTURERS MUST HAVE SEEN

BRUSH AND SOD HUT, ARIZONA

GROUP OF BRUSH AND SOD HUTS, ARIZONA

SAME KIND BUILT BY CALIFORNIA INDIANS

IROQUOIS LONG HOUSE

ONE KIND OF TEPEE

HUT MADE OF HIDES

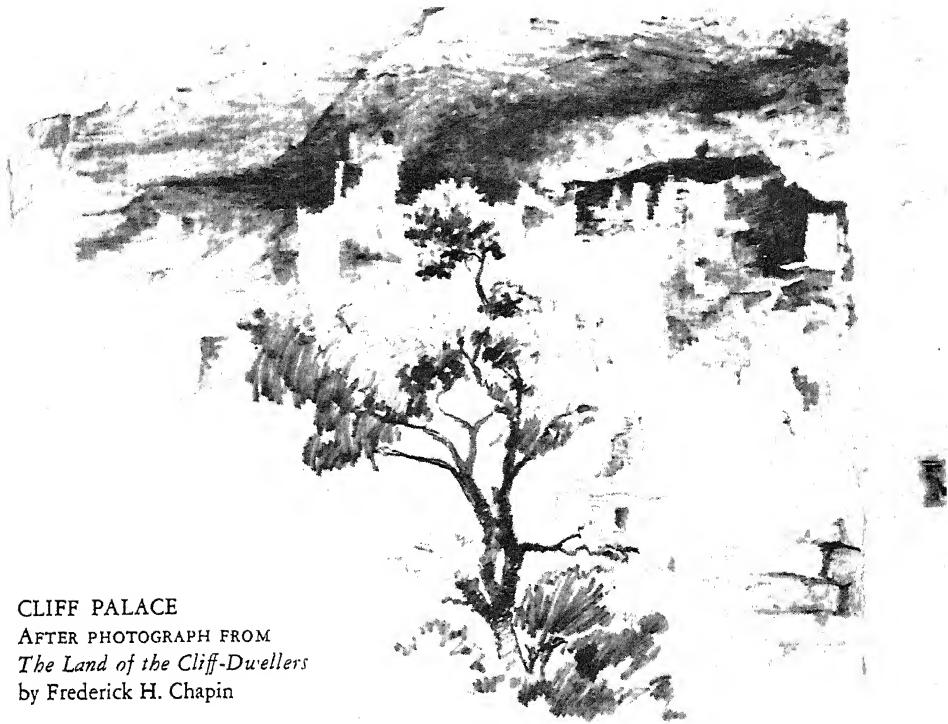
TEPEE FOR PARTIES

of the passage. Here the Indians cooked and squatted—fire-lit, bronzed groups of communal life.

Several of these dwellings formed a tiny village, surrounded by garden land with one or more rows of palisades to protect it from attack.

In great contrast to these simple abodes were the discoveries of Coronado. He and his army of adventurers marched through whole towns on their famous journey northward to find the Seven Cities of Cibola.

Some were occupied by native tribes and some were even then in



CLIFF PALACE
AFTER PHOTOGRAPH FROM
The Land of the Cliff-Dwellers
by Frederick H. Chapin

ruins. Many, however, are still standing, and we can see that these dwellings of the Pueblos are real houses. They are built of rubble stone, or of adobe blocks coated with a mixture made from water, earth, and burned twigs. Usually they are grouped in city-like arrangement on high mesas, reached by winding paths or by steps cut into the steep cliffs.

Usually, too, they are of several stories, terraced one above the other: sometimes three or four, sometimes more. At mountain-bound Taos, New Mexico—where after centuries the Indians are still watching for the return of Montezuma flying on an eagle's back—the pueblo (as these village dwellings are called) rises to seven stories.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

There are no doors or windows on the lower story of these pueblos. The only way to enter them is up a ladder and down a hole in the roof. Hewn timbers form the horizontal rafters, and probably stone axes were used to cut them.

Each pueblo was built with at least one estufa, an underground chamber, either square or circular in form. Here the chiefs held council. Here religious ceremonies were held. On the walls of some of them there are pictographs, showing clouds and rainfall, antelopes and other animals.

The estufas belonged to the men, and the women could enter them only to bring food. The houses belonged to the women, who made the mortar and built the walls.

One of Coronado's followers was the first white man to look into the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. Coronado's army passed Acoma, still essentially unchanged after three centuries on its three-hundred-foot rock above the plain. Probably neither Coronado nor any of his men discovered the homes of the cliff dwellers.

Along the Rio Grande, Gila, and San Juan rivers, in New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado, are mountains and valleys full of beauty and mystery. An unknown people lived there, in single caves and in many-storied buildings.

In a steep walled canyon with winding defiles and overhanging ledges, in Colorado's Mesa Verde, is one of the loveliest of these dwellings. It lies like a great palace, a towered fortress, under an oval cliff with cozy buildings perched inaccessible near-by. It was undoubtedly a communistic building. Traces of one hundred and twenty-four rooms were found on the ground floor. In its several stories a thousand persons may have lived.

These remarkable homes of the cliff dwellers seem like things born full-fledged and ripe, but without the seed of further development. The workmanship in stone and plaster is that of advanced craftsmen.

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ZUNI PUEBLOS

AFTER PHOTOGRAPH FROM

⑩ *The Land of the Cliff-Dwellers* by Frederick H. Chapin



- 5 Isolated columns still exist, fireplaces, wall paintings, household wares. Steps and stairways rise from canyon streams to dizzy heights.
- 6 High on the cliffs are picturesque towers, evidently watch towers to protect the valleys below; but of the dwellers themselves, only skulls and a few skeletons remain.
- 7 Perhaps these were the homes of the mythical Amazons, the cities rich in gold and silver whose fabled glories lured the Spanish from Mexico.
- 8 Perhaps this was the place Coronado and his men pushed on to see, when the pueblos of Arizona and New Mexico yielded up no riches. If so, Coronado would have come too late to find it in its glory—even if his course had taken him into these canyons, instead of to a "Quivira" which turned out to be a collection of crude Indian villages with wigwams of straw.



OLDEST HOUSE IN
SANTA FE, N. M.

OLDEST HOUSE IN ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA.
BOTH CLAIM TO BE OLDEST IN AMERICA

CHAPTER III EARLY SETTLEMENTS

DISCOVERY of native settlements was all well enough, but some of these explorers and others that came after them wanted to make settlements of their own. Many of these were unsuccessful, like the French Huguenot settlement on Parris Island, South Carolina, and Sir Walter Raleigh's in Virginia.

St. Augustine in Florida and San Gabriel, New Mexico, 1565 and 1598, are the earliest successes. Menéndez founded one, and Oñate (who married Isabel, granddaughter of Cortez and great-granddaughter of Montezuma) founded the other. Both leaders were Spanish. Both settle-



CHARLOTTE STREET, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA.

ments were Spanish. Indeed, both Florida and New Mexico were Spanish for far more than two hundred years.

So it happens that Florida and New Mexico each claims to have the oldest house in the United States.

FLORIDA

Near the old city gates, near the plaza and near Fort Marion, which have been standing since Spanish days, is Florida's oldest house. It is



FIRST WOODEN SCHOOLHOUSE, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA.

said that it was the hermitage and chapel of the monks who came over with Menéndez and that it dates from 1571.

True to Spanish precedent, it has porches and a balcony overlooking a patio, or enclosed courtyard, with a garden. In this garden is an old Spanish wishing well, blessed by the monks. The house is built of coquina rock, a shell and sand formation quarried on an island near-by—the material of which Fort Marion is made. The upper wall on the street side is of wood. Inside there are hand-hewn ceiling beams and a coquina floor.

St. Augustine was a marked place for the pirates. They found it within easy striking distance when they came up from Tortuga to attack the treasure ships. If 1571 is the true date, the old house was standing when Sir Francis Drake sacked and burned the city in 1586. It is known to have been there when the English took possession of the city in 1763,



OLD CURIOSITY SHOP, ST. GEORGE STREET, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA.

and it is on record that a descendant of the Alvarez and Menéndez families bought it when Spain regained her settlement twenty years later. It is now owned by the Historical Society.

In the Spanish quarter in St. Augustine near the cathedral is a house which was built in 1690. Of stone and coquina, it is set in a lovely garden with palms and myrtles and old-fashioned flower beds. Seated in the patio, one can tell the time of day by listening to the old-time cathedral bells.

It was the royal treasury. Here the Spanish grandees could safely store their doubloons, for pirates still sailed the seas.

Fire damaged the building at the beginning of the seventeen hundreds. The wooden upper portion was added at the time of restoration.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

The Indians were on the warpath and it was unsafe to go into the forests for lumber. So ships brought the wood for floors and doors from New England.

They seem to have been a kind of prophecy, for the United States bought Florida in 1819, and an American doctor bought the old house thirteen years later.

His granddaughter gave the place to the city. It still contains the lovely colonial furniture which came from Connecticut as part of his wife's dowry.

NEW MEXICO

The colonists in Florida came of course in picturesque sailing vessels, as the first explorers did. In fact, most of the early settlements were made either on islands, on the seacoast, or up rivers not far from the ocean.

However, the seat of government for Spanish America had been in Mexico City for over seventy years, when Oñate, following earlier Spanish explorers and mission fathers, marched off to start the first regular colony in New Mexico.

With a great wagon train and 7,000 cattle, his little army of 400 people—soldiers in armor, priests in their robes, colonists with their wives and children—reached El Paso and began the journey up the Rio Grande valley.

With the company were Mexican Indians who acted as interpreters as they passed through Indian villages. When they finally reached one where Oñate decided to stop, the Indians received the newcomers with such hospitality that Oñate called the place San Juan de los Caballeros—"St. John of the Gentlemen." And across the river from these native friends, Oñate established his capital and named it San Gabriel.

About 1610, Don Pedro de Peralta, a later governor, founded Santa



COURTYARD OF OLD PALACE, SANTA FE, N. M.

Fe. It wasn't as simple a name in the old days. Then it was: La Villa Real de Santa Fe de San Francisco de Assisi. Which, translated, reads: The Royal City of the Holy Faith of St. Francis of Assisi.

The capital of the colony was soon moved here, and it has been the capital of New Mexico ever since.

Near the old plaza and across the street from San Miguel, probably the oldest church in the United States, stands New Mexico's oldest house. They say it was the home of an Indian chief whose pueblo stood where Santa Fe now stands. Though originally higher, it now has but one story. As it was built by Indians and before the days of glass in the

HOUSES IN AMERICA

New World, the window openings have wooden bars and now are simply screened.

The story goes that Coronado used it as headquarters during the time when, somewhat like the king of France in the old song, he marched up north and then marched south again.

In all this "oldest house" rivalry, New Mexico has two advantages over Florida. As yet no pre-historic buildings have been found in the earlier settlement, and documentary evidence backs up tradition in regard to New Mexico's Palace of the Governors. Any day, however, St. Augustine may complete its almost perfect line of evidence.

The old palace is known to have been built at the founding of Santa Fe. Facing the Spanish-Mexican plaza, it has played a vital part in the picturesque and exciting events of the great Southwest.

Originally it was both government headquarters and a defense against the Indians. The front was longer, having then a chapel at one end and a prison at the other. It is built around a patio, that descendant of Mediterranean and oriental building, an inside yet outdoor living room. The main building with its rough woodwork, huge roof beams, and dirt floors, contained not only offices and a great court room, but the home of the governor and his family.

At the rear, this building opened on the shaded patio, and the structure continued on with servants' quarters, stables for the horses of the household and the cavalry, soldiers' barracks and parade ground. The presidio, or fort, would have covered two city blocks. The whole citadel was enclosed by a wall, made, like the buildings, of adobe.

To this presidio the Spanish settlers rushed from the outlying districts when word came of the great uprising of the Indians in 1680. Here they were besieged, with water supply cut off and food supplies low. And from here, after desperately driving back the Indians, the

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

Spaniards escaped—down the Rio Grande valley, losing many of their number on their way back to Mexico.

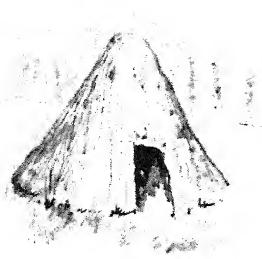
For twelve years the proud old palace was in the hands of the natives who used it for their livestock. For themselves, they built a pueblo on three sides of the plaza in front of this palace-stable.

When the Spanish recaptured Santa Fe, the old building again became the governor's home. It remained so till 1910, since when it has been a museum. Back in 1792, because of unemployment throughout the province, the authorities had it restored: an old example of government relief.

It left Spanish control for Mexican, and then in 1846 General Kearny brought the American flag to Santa Fe. For a brief space during the Civil War, the old fortress was in the hands of the Confederate Army.

This was the end of the famous Santa Fe trail, with its pack horses and its wagon trains. Trappers; adventurers, pathfinders found their way here. Always it has been in the midst of lovely and colorful Indian towns. Major Pike of Pike's Peak fame was imprisoned here by Spanish authorities. James Calhoun, New Mexico's first American governor, of course lived here. One governor took the oath of office at sunrise on the palace roof. Still another governor wrote parts of *Ben Hur* in this Spanish building, and here his wife wrote a most appropriate book: *The Land of the Pueblos*.

St. Augustine in Florida, the colony in New Mexico, Champlain's in Quebec (1608) were the successful settlements north of Mexico. Aside from these, nothing permanent happened before Jamestown got really under way and the *Mayflower* reached Plymouth Rock.



ENGLISH HUTS

PROBABLY SIMILAR ONES MADE FIRST BY
EARLY ENGLISH SETTLERS IN THIS COUNTRY

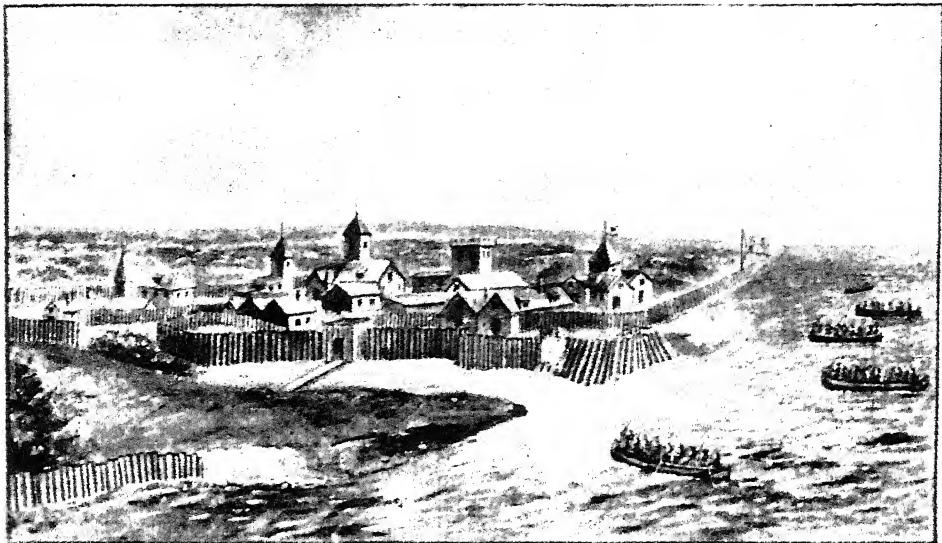
CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST SHELTERS

THE Norsemen, it is related, built shelters for themselves and then strong houses to which they returned year after year, all long before 1492; but if these houses were built, they were without further influence on American architecture and they have entirely disappeared.

In any case, however, the original houses were only temporary shelters. When the first settlers came to this country, all they could see were rocks and sand and trees and Indians. It didn't look much like Sweden, England, Holland, or Germany. Fortunately food was plentiful, fish abundant in the sea, game abundant in the forests. All the settlers had to do was catch and kill and cook and eat it—an easy thing to do.

But you can't enjoy every meal of every day out in the open, especially in bad weather. Even if they could, they would have been afraid to do it. They didn't know much about the Indians, except how they looked,



THE SETTLEMENT OF JAMESTOWN, VA.

and their looks were not encouraging to Europeans. And they couldn't be sure the wild animals would just sit by and watch the campfire. They might want to help themselves to food or people. So about as badly as they needed food, they needed protection—protection from wind and weather, from wild beasts and Indians. So they made temporary shelters for themselves at once. These were not all alike. They differed with the different nationalities of the settlers, each, naturally, taking advantage of the materials at hand.

Just what kinds they built we do not know. Examples of them have not come down to us. Some writers say that the English at Jamestown built wigwams like the Indians. Others say that they and the New England settlers built conical and ridgepole huts of trees, earth, clay, and brush after models they had seen in England in the poorer country places.

Descriptions by contemporary writers are quaint and interesting but vague. However, a letter written at Manhattan Island describing the

HOUSES IN AMERICA

first shelters there gives us a clear picture. Secretary Van Tienhoven says they "dig a square pit in the ground, cellar fashion, six or seven feet deep, as long and as broad as they think proper; case the earth all around with timber, which they line with the bark of trees or something else to prevent the caving-in of the earth; floor this cellar with planks, and wainscot it overhead for a ceiling; raise a roof of spars clear up, and cover the spars with bark or green sods so that they can live dry and warm in these houses with their entire families for two, three, or four years. It being understood that partitions are run through these cellars—which are adapted to the size of the family."

Apparently Penn's colonists at Philadelphia made similar shelters along the Delaware River. They were part below ground and part above, with chimneys of stone, pebbles, and clay. These hovels sound flimsy, but they weren't as flimsy as they sound. Even a law couldn't put an end to them. Even in 1760 one was left on the waterfront.



FIRST SHELTERS

CHAPTER V COMMUNITY LIFE

THE next thing the colonists did was to build a fort. This was a more pretentious undertaking, a place of refuge for all while they were making stronger houses.

Our authorities seem pretty well agreed that these houses were often of hewn planks or trunks, one end driven into the ground. This palisaded type of house was known in England and of course resembled the defenses of Indian villages.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

However, Lord Baltimore's colony off Chesapeake Bay seems to have taken a much finer way of beginning their new community life.

They arrived at St. Mary's in the spring, and the story goes that they bought their whole settlement from the Indians. This contained wigwams, corn fields, and thirty miles of land besides. Then they asked the Indians to share the village with them until harvest time. The men learned Indian ways of fishing and hunting. From the squaws, the women learned how to prepare native foods, how to dress skins for clothing, how to adopt new ways of living. Best of all, the newcomers could adjust themselves to this crude life in a friendly, not a hostile atmosphere.

Thanks to the Indians, instead of suffering from hunger as many other English colonists did when winter came, their first harvest was a great success. They even sent a ship to carry the extra corn to New England and the ship returned with a cargo of the Puritans' famous dried fish.

The first English houses had one room, literally a "living room." It was heated by an end fireplace. Often there was no floor other than the earth.

When a wood floor was put in they sprinkled it with a layer of sand. This sand became a source of art for the women and of education for the children. The women worked patterns in it with their brooms. The children marked it with their letters and figures.

Even in England, at that time, glass was a luxury. These houses had thin linen or oiled paper in their windows, protected by wooden shutters. The roofs were thatched and in some communities the law preserved the supply by creating a reed reservation.

House furnishings were simple settles, chests, and baby cradles, all hand made. Before candles, the open fire and pine knots burning gave light to those who were up after sundown.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Meanwhile the more advanced part of community life got under way. This was due to the beginning of co-operative industry: logrolling to clear the land for a newly married pair; corn husking and quilting parties to facilitate labor and give an opportunity for sociability.

The church services, which were held at first in the crudest of hovels, were now held in a white meeting-house on the village green or Common. These Commons were from the beginning the central point of many villages, where all the community could keep its cows and sheep and pigs safe from wolves and Indians.

Mills for grinding grain, and brickyards appeared. The best trees were reserved for the king's Navy—but the forests had unlimited lumber, and after sawmills were built, lumbering, along with fish salting and the inevitable fur trading, became an important industry.

All this led to streets and stores, markets and town halls. It led away from the first crude houses and increasingly to better houses.



ADOBE BUILDING, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CAL.; STONE AND BRICK

CHAPTER VI

THE SPANISH COLONIAL TRADITION

WE have tried to show that many nations had a peek at the new country and a chance to make it theirs. However, only Spain, France, and England claimed it on a wholesale scale.

Following the history of the country sketchily, it is interesting to see what lies behind the old assertion that our colonial tradition is predominantly English.

It seems that Columbus discovered America for Ferdinand and Isabella just about the time that the Spanish were rejoicing because they had driven the Moslems from Granada, but were lamenting because the Protestant Reformation was sweeping over Europe to the north. Great religious enthusiasm filled the air, and they looked on the finding of this new world as an act of God: it should be made Spanish and Catholic.

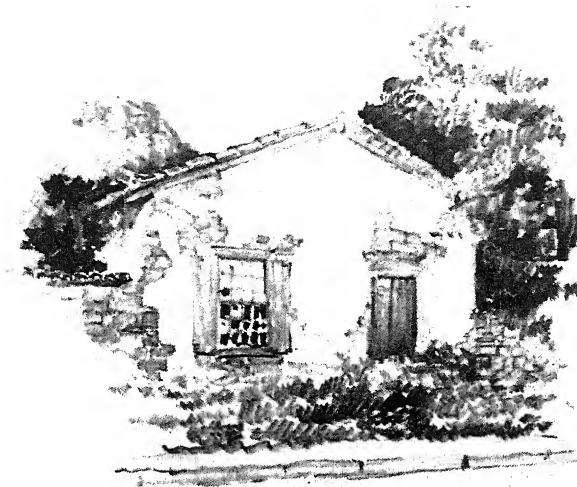
So it happens that most of the Spanish settlements north of Mexico



OLD ADOBE HOUSE, SANTA BARBARA, CAL.

were primarily missions and often placed as outposts, to hold the country against other nations. Missions on a small scale began in Arizona and New Mexico in Coronado's time, and tradition gives that date to San Miguel Church in Santa Fe. In Texas they were started as a defense against the French.

However, it was the Russians from Siberia who worried Spain the most. Word came that they were settling Alaska, that they had built forts and houses, that they were trading with the Indians, and that they were cultivating land along the coast toward San Francisco Bay. Also that they were bringing the Greek Orthodox Church into so-called Spanish territory.

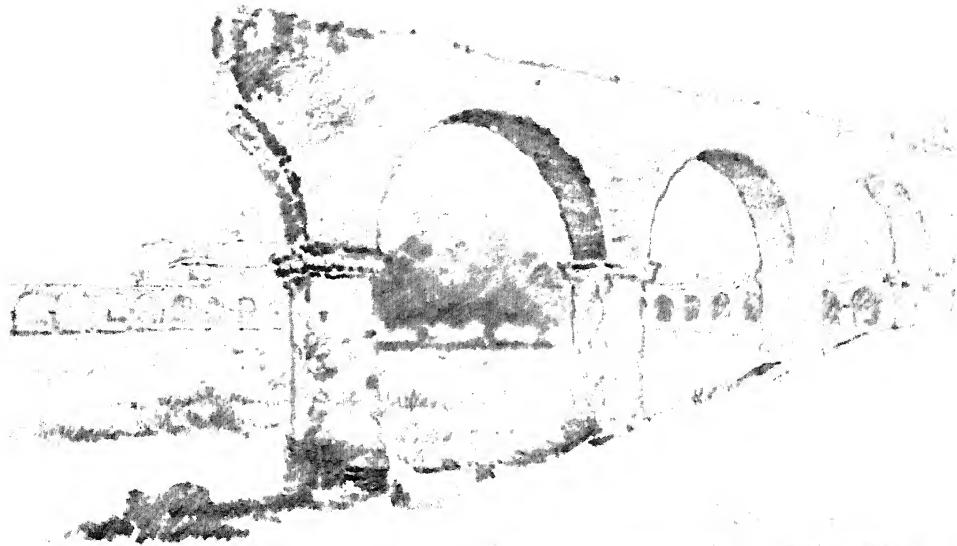


GENERAL SHERMAN'S HEADQUARTERS, MONTEREY, CAL.

In answer, the brilliant Junípero Serra was sent from Spain to save California. This he did by organizing a line of missions and forts, "one day's march apart," as far north as Sonoma, beginning with that of San Diego in 1769.

With one or two padres in charge, a cross was planted and a rude shelter made to serve both as church and home for the priests. A lovely Spanish bell was hung from a tree, to call the Indians to the mass of dedication. A presidio was built for the soldiers, and usually there were only six of them.

We are told that the first regular mission buildings at Santa Barbara contained a chapel, a house for the fathers, a kitchen, and quarters for servants. Since they were designed by Spanish priests, they were built around a patio. The work was done by Indian converts collected either willingly or by force, so the walls were made of adobe in the usual three-foot thickness of Indian construction. They had heavy poles for rafters and the roofs were thatched. The next year Spanish tiles replaced the



MISSION AT
MONTEREY, CAL.

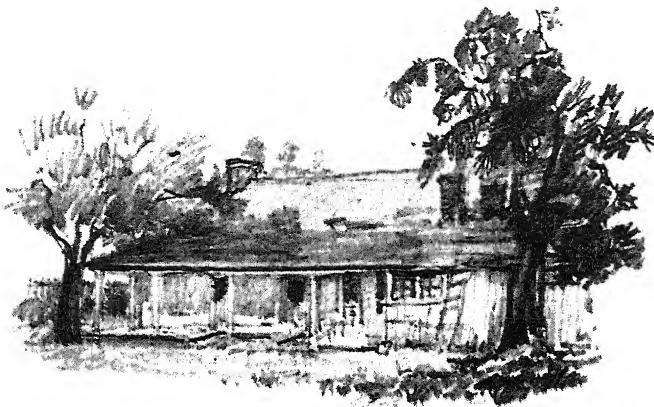


MISSION OF
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

rude covering — differing shades of red tiles still make California houses lovely. Large flat tiles, too, soon covered the crude earth floors.

Unlike the English on the eastern seaboard, the Spaniards wanted to use the Indians, not drive them from the land. Their object was to train them as a peasantry for Spain.

Thus the missions grew as institutions, with schoolrooms, shops, mills, tanneries, and corrals for livestock. Connected with them were



ADOBÉ HOUSE AT SONORA

enormous range lands needed for their thousands of sheep and cattle.

The mission buildings were set in great gardens, orchards, and vineyards. Plants and flowering shrubs grew in profusion, not only those native to California but those transplanted from the distant homeland and settlements to the south.

Around the main mission were groups of adobes: homes for the Indians, for the Spanish dons who came as overlords, and for the farmers and laborers sent by Spain to train the Indians.

With highly educated padres in charge, the missions became great agricultural and manufacturing centers, providing vast fortunes for Spain and, later, for the Mexican government, which finally confiscated them.

Meanwhile Yankee skippers had followed in the wake of Sir Francis Drake around the Horn. They began trading with the Spaniards, taking New England products to California, and bringing back to the Atlantic seacoast cargoes of tallow and hides. After a while many of them settled in this Spanish territory, to begin the slow process of uniting English and Spanish precedent in ways of living.

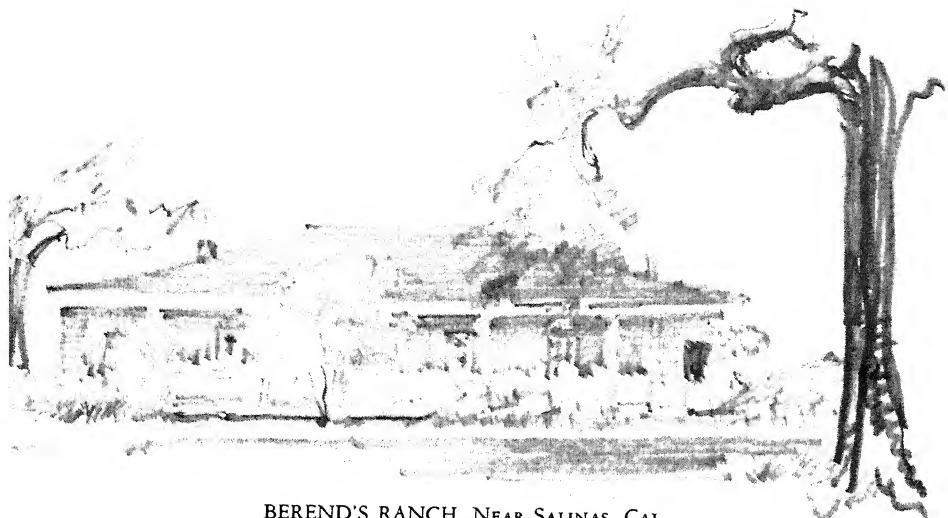
THE SPANISH COLONIAL TRADITION

Today we have some very fascinating old houses at Monterey and other ports on the California shore: homes of Spanish dons, of course, and then, from a later period, houses built by men of English descent. Most of these old California buildings are of adobe, some walls covered with a smooth mud plaster. As a protection from the rain, they were whitewashed frequently. Indeed, there is an old Spanish proverb: the whitewasher's brush is never still.

Often the patio had a veranda on three sides. This served as a corridor for the living and storage rooms and for the kitchen. The only way to



"CONCORD," NATCHEZ, MISS.
RESIDENCE OF FIRST SPANISH GOVERNOR



BEREND'S RANCH, NEAR SALINAS, CAL.

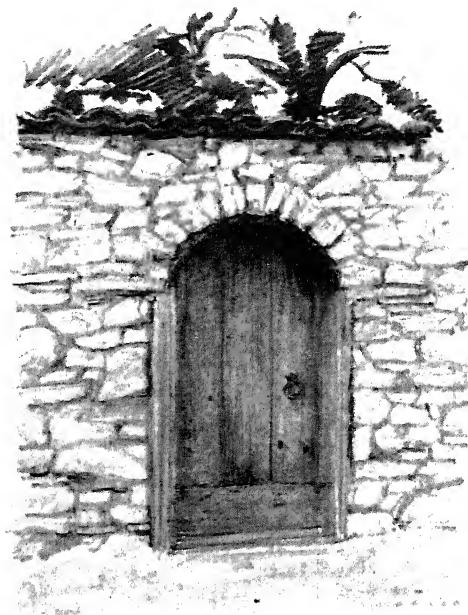
reach the bedrooms was by an outside staircase leading from the veranda to the balcony. Once on the balcony, you could enter the rooms individually, and, once inside one of them, you could go directly from room to room.

When the Yankees came, they built their staircases as they did at home. The Spaniards liked the idea and did the same. Today old houses with an outside staircase are rarely found. The floors on the first story are sometimes of tile. The Americans made their floors of wood, and wood floors were sometimes added in the Spanish houses. Usually the walls were of white plaster and the ceilings of hand-hewn pine planks supported by hand-hewn joists. In the upper rooms, the ceilings were frequently of pine board with beaded joints.

Their windows are one of the chief charms of these old adobes. Set flush with the outside surface, the window openings form deep recesses in the thick walls. They often contain seats and paneled sides and shutters. These windows with their little panes and delicate workman-

THE SPANISH COLONIAL TRADITION

ship were, of course, introduced by the English ship carpenters and carvers. As a matter of fact, whole houses were brought from the Atlantic seaboard around the Horn and set up on the Pacific coast by enterprising Yankees.



DETAIL OF STONE WORK
GARDEN GATE, MONTEREY, CAL.

CHAPTER VII

THE FRENCH COLONIAL TRADITION

WHEN Champlain came to Canada to start his settlement in 1608, he found near the spot he chose the temporary houses put up by Cartier's men—rough wooden cabins with foundations and chimneys of stone.

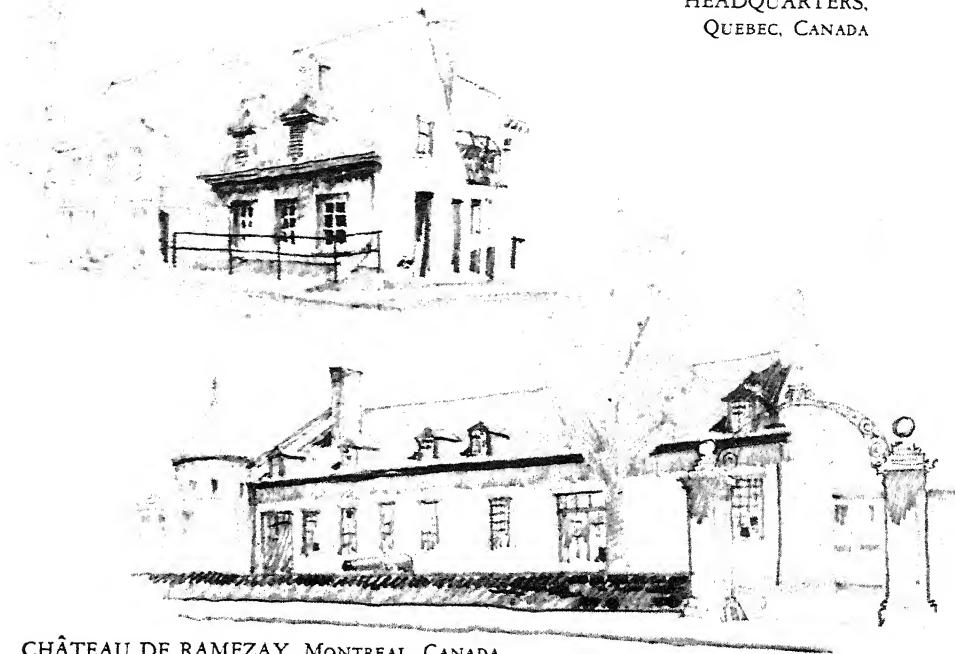
Since the European countries were still looking for that elusive and impossible northwest passage to India, in all probability the adventurous Champlain started Quebec as a part-way station between France and the Orient.

However, it was not very long before his palisaded fort with its storehouse and few dwellings grew into a town. Perhaps the gay French touch of a dovecote and a sundial which he placed on the roof of one of his crude houses became a kind of fairy wand that turned his settlement into a city of homes—a city so French that even today it has been called as old French as France itself.

The architecture of the city and of the province of Quebec is said to be reminiscent of Normandy. We still find houses a story and a half high, and one of their most attractive features is a high steep roof made still more picturesque by small dormer windows. Sometimes these little houses have three attic stories and the roof has corresponding lines of dormers: the lowest small, the next smaller, and above that, the smallest.

In the walls of the house, however, though the windows are still small, they are few in number—for winters are cold in Normandy, and very cold in Canada. Snow in Quebec is heavy and winters are long, so projecting eaves and wooden shutters gave added protection against the weather. These houses were so suited to their part of the country

MONTCALM
HEADQUARTERS,
QUEBEC, CANADA



CHÂTEAU DE RAMEZAY, MONTREAL, CANADA

that the French Canadians have kept on building them to this day.

True to his nature, Champlain continued his explorations and adventures. Traders and priests followed the upper St. Lawrence after a while and the Great Lakes became known to these Frenchmen. Father Marquette and Joliet reached the Mississippi by way of Lake Michigan, the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, and sailed down to a point beyond its union with the Arkansas River. Finally the French La Salle followed the "Father of Waters" to its mouth, claiming the land, as far as it might reach, for the king of France.

By the time it was known definitely that none of the rivers along the

HOUSES IN AMERICA

eastern seaboard would carry a ship to the Orient, the French had a very lucrative trade in furs with the Indians and the French king was giving great grants of land called "seigneuries" to the younger sons of the nobility.

It was the Canadian-born Bienville, however, who founded New Orleans—a strategic point near the Gulf of Mexico to complete the French control of the Mississippi.

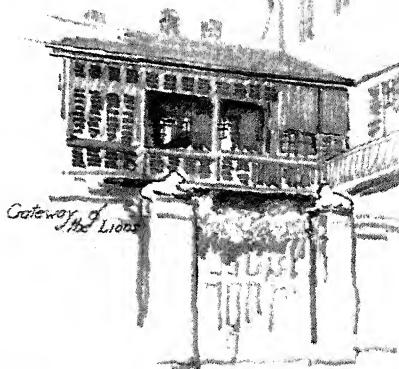
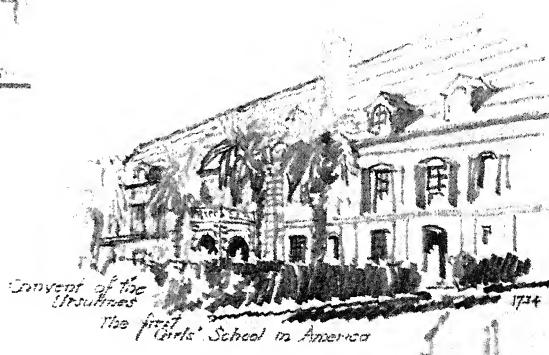
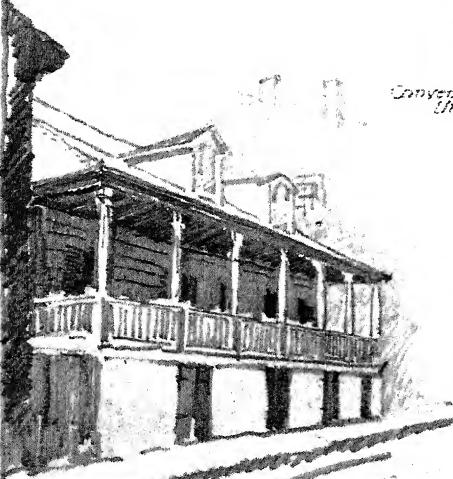
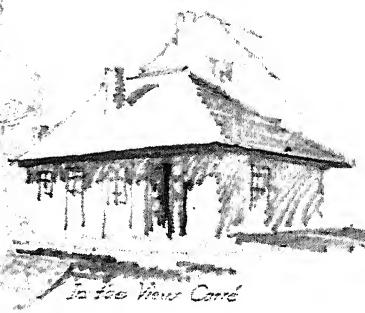
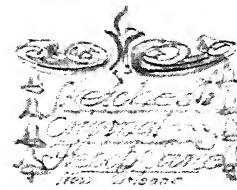
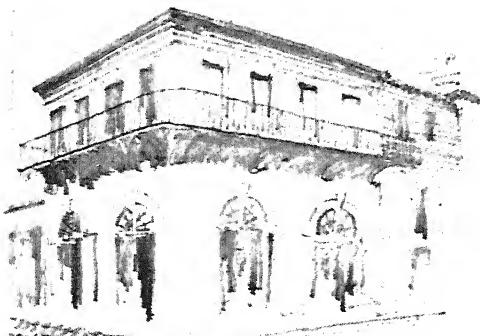
France sent royal engineers to lay out the little town, and land was given to retired soldiers and those who wanted to start homes and families in this corner of New France.

The first houses were cabins of split cypress logs clinked with a mixture of moss and mud and roofed with palmetto thatch. As the settlement prospered a gallery was added to the cabin and a lesser cabin for slaves appeared across the backyard.

Gradually houses more like those in Canada were built. The projecting roofs served more a summertime than winter use. Indeed the eaves were only about eight feet above the "footway" and came out so far that the rain water could fall directly from them into the gutter. They became a stationary umbrella or sunshade for the passerby.

Between the houses were alleys leading into paved courtyards in the rear. These houses were a combination of home and place of business. On the street would be found a store, and even today one frequently sees a tiny shop window jutting out from an old façade. The family lived upstairs, and often in the upper story of a wing above the courtyard. Usually these houses had a chimney in the center and attractive dormers in the high roof; the red tiles of the roof contrasted pleasingly with the plastered surface of the dwelling.

Outside on the Bayou St. John where the custom house stood were plantation houses two stories high with pillared porches. It is said that the people of New Orleans itself in the old days were afraid to build



HOUSES IN AMERICA

any but low houses—the land was so unstable. However, "Bienville's Hotel, the finest house in town," according to an old letter, was two stories high with an attic. "In all the stories there are large windows but with no glass. The frames are closed with very thin linen which admits as much light as glass."

The letter was written by a young girl just after her arrival in New Orleans with the Ursuline nuns. She was describing the house where the nuns lived until the convent founded by Louis XV was ready for them. This convent stands today, one of the few original French buildings.

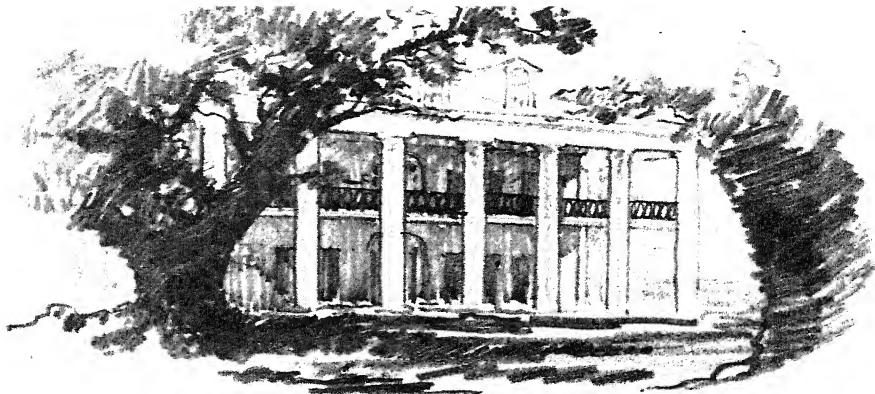
At the end of the French and Indian War, when France gave up Canada and all the land east of the Mississippi to England, Louisiana was ceded to her ally, the king of Spain. The Spanish took possession of New Orleans and larger dwelling houses appeared. This was especially true toward the end of the seventeen hundreds, after two devastating fires necessitated practically rebuilding the city.

Many of these later "hotels" as well as some of the older houses still stand in the Vieux Carré in New Orleans. Former homes of bankers, professional men, and what-not, these larger houses also combine home and place of business.

The office or counting house is on the street—between buildings are portals which lead into a covered passageway and again through an archway into the courtyard. This is surrounded on four sides by walls which give shade most of the day.

On the ground floor of this part of the house are kitchen, slave quarters, and stable. A grilled doorway leads to the main stair hall, and up a winding stairway one reaches the second floor where the living rooms are found.

Toward the rear along one side of the courtyard was found the "garçonnier" or boys' quarters. This had one or two stories at different levels from the main house. Each story had a gallery, and little stair-



A LOUISIANA PLANTATION HOUSE

cases connected them. The garçonnière was sometimes used for extra guests, but primarily it was for the youngsters. Here they could come and go, or tear around without tracking mud on the best rugs or upsetting the best parlor furniture.

In the paved patio below, one finds flowers and shrubs and a fountain. Sometimes the water from the fountain basin flows as in a brook bed down the side of the entrance passage. In some passageways in the old days a boat was fastened near the ceiling to be used in case the Mississippi turned the streets into canals.

New Orleans is famous for its quaint façades ornamented with balconies and grilles. The iron-work was added by the Spaniards and made by their African slaves.

In the early days New Orleans was looked to by the French nobility as a place of romance where great fortunes could be made. After the

HOUSES IN AMERICA

storming of the Bastille, they found it a place of refuge, as did the exiles from the land of Evangeline.

Napoleon regained New Orleans from Spain only long enough to turn it over as part of the Louisiana Purchase to the United States in 1803, yet in spirit it was always French. Its gayety, its laughter, its Mardi Gras, never surrendered to the Spanish or to the Americans. Although a part of the United States so long, although most of the city has grown up since, we shall always think of it as French. When the city is mentioned, the old French quarter and its creoles come at once to mind. Yet much in that French quarter is Spanish and the very name creole was used first by the Spaniards to designate their American born children.



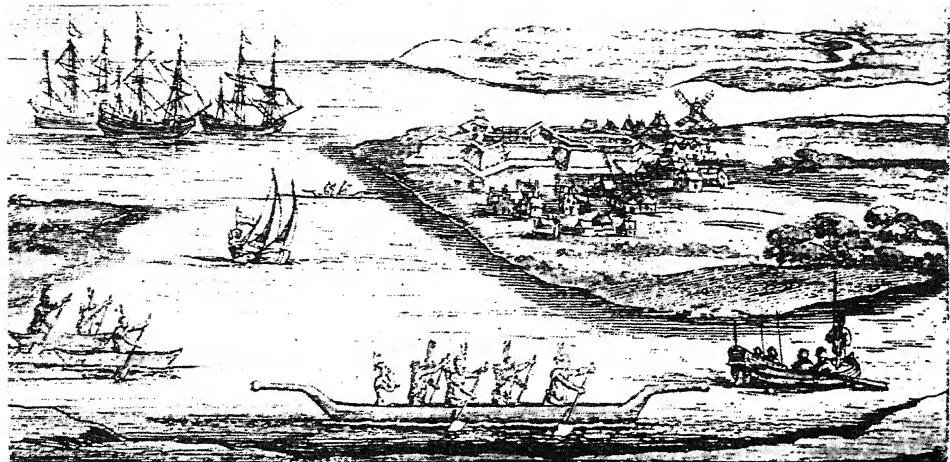
VAN BRUNT HOUSE, ABOUT 1680

CHAPTER VIII

THE DUTCH COLONIAL TRADITION

THE Dutch came first as traders. They were fighters, too, when it looked like good business or when occasion called for it. Hadn't the Netherlanders fought for their religious freedom when they had been persecuted by Spain? Hadn't they founded the Dutch Republic?

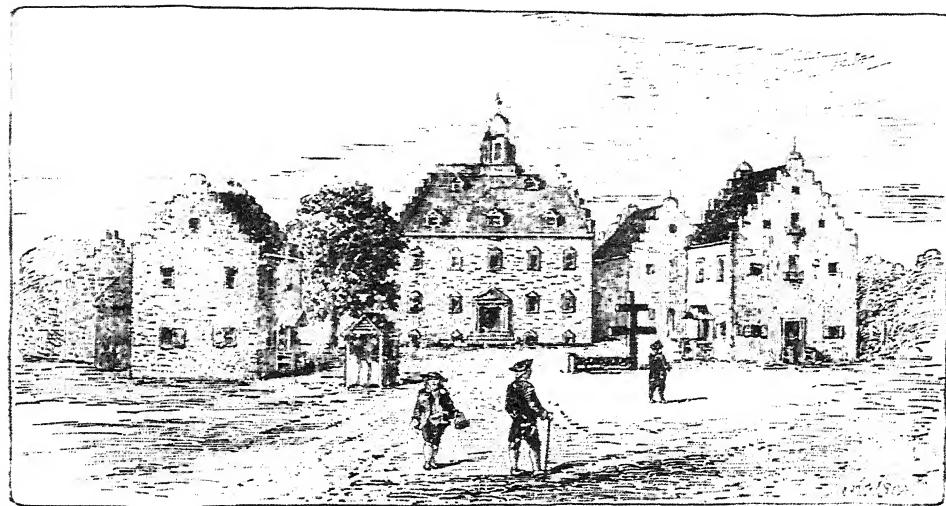
As soon as the war with Spain was over, the commercial genius of the new nation had asserted itself in the formation of the East India Company to get their share of the rich trade with the Orient. England's horoscope must have coincided in spots with Holland's, for it had an East India Company, too, located in London.



NEW AMSTERDAM, N. Y., ABOUT 1630-35

However, it was the Dutch who were the great commercial nation of the world in 1609. They had more ships than any other European country, and it was for them that Henry Hudson sailed. Since he didn't find a short route to India, the company wasn't much interested. They cared very little for Hudson's Bay and the wilderness farther south, and they weren't thrilled over the voyage of Adriaen Block who followed in 1611—even though he discovered a new and beautiful river, the Connecticut, and wrote of his travels in a most enthusiastic vein.

Some other merchants did see possibilities in this new land, got a charter for three years' trading rights, set up a fort and trading post on an island in the Hudson River near the present site of Albany and another post on Manhattan Island. Meanwhile the West India Company had come into being just as a twelve-year truce with Spain came to an end. They wanted a part in the rich trade Spain had with her American possessions to the south. Since the government saw this as helpful in

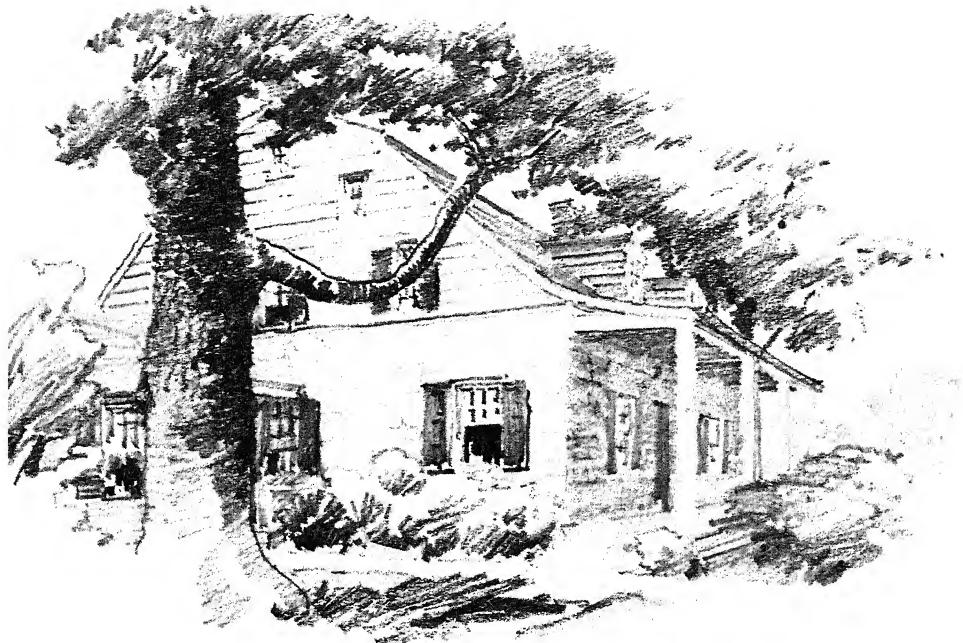


THE STADT HUYS, NEW AMSTERDAM, N. Y., 1642

the renewed war with Spain, the new company was given great powers.

There was, however, a clause in its charter which bound them "to people and advance the Dutch possessions in North America"; so about 1623 the company sent over a ship carrying thirty families to settle in the wilderness. These people were mostly Walloons, French-speaking descendants of Cæsar's ancient Belgæ, from the frontier between France and Flanders. Some stayed on Manhattan Island, some went to Long Island. Four young married couples formed the first settlement in New Jersey, opposite the future Philadelphia. Most of them went up the Hudson and helped start Fort Orange, now Albany.

Though the company advertised for adventurers, offered inducements, and sent over colonists, they didn't dare set up a regular government. The English were calling the Dutch interlopers. England claimed the whole coast because the Cabots had sailed down it in English ships.



TERHUNE HOUSE, ABOUT 1670, HACKENSACK, N. J., STONE FIRST STORY

But when England and the Netherlands formed an alliance in 1625 against their common enemy, Spain, the West India Company picked up courage and sent over Peter Minuit as governor with the title of Director.

The Dutch policy was to give religious freedom, which they had won for themselves in the mother country, and to buy land from the Indians, thus keeping their good will and offsetting England's claim to that part of the seacoast.

The island of Manhattan was bought for a chest of gay ribbons,



TRUE DUTCH GABLE, BEFORE 1700, ALBANY, N. Y.

beads, and embroidered clothes. The company continued to send over colonists, but finding it expensive business, instituted the patroon system, much like the feudal plan of France in Canada. Their stockholders were offered estates "along the sea and navigable rivers." They were to be supplied with Negro servants. The patroons, on the other hand, had to buy the land from the Indians, and each start a colony of fifty adults within four years. It was their business to furnish houses for their tenants, tools, and so forth—besides a schoolmaster and a minister.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

Grants were taken up both sides of the Hudson River, all around New York Harbor, and up Delaware Bay. Of course the whole scheme was a great commercial plan. It was a matter of trading posts, or groups of tenants around overlords. As a matter of fact, except for a fort or so, it seems that these early grants in Delaware and New Jersey either failed to be settled or failed when settled—the latter largely due to stupid treatment of the Indians.

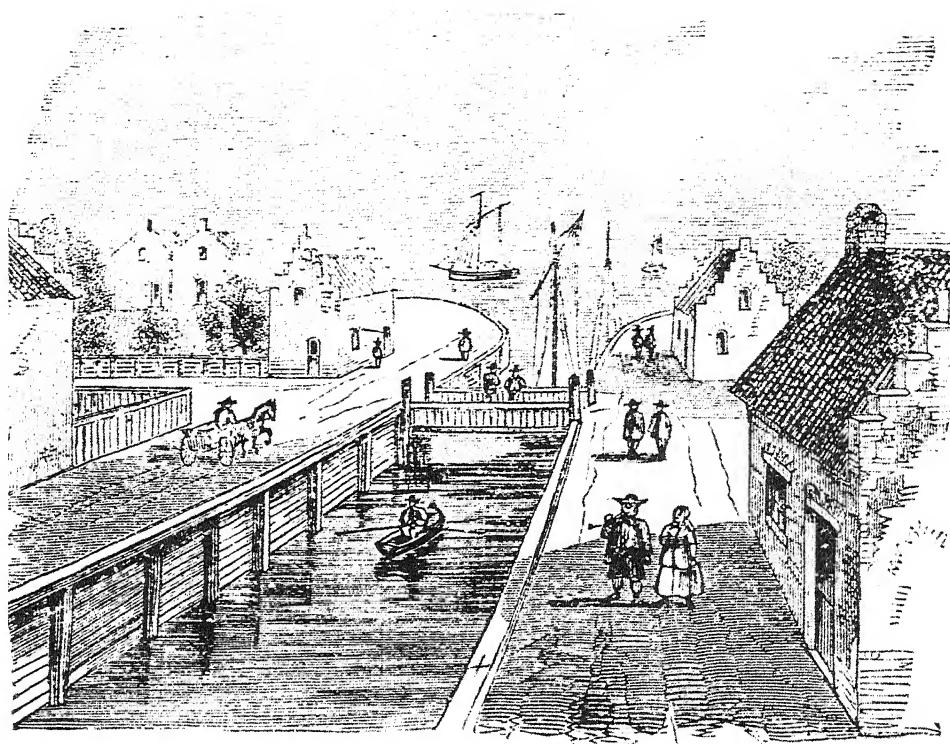
The patroons had great trading privileges, but the company reserved for itself the exclusive control of Manhattan Island and of their fur-trading posts.

The patroons ruled with a despotic hand; so did the governors. The patroons took advantage of the company; so did the governors. The tenants followed suit and cheated the patroons. It wasn't long before all classes were engaged in the rich trade the company had intended to reserve for itself. The Indians exchanged furs for anything anybody had to offer.

Minuit was recalled for favoring the patroons against the company; his successor, van Twiller, for filling his own pockets; Kieft, at the threat of the colonists to leave New Amsterdam if he wasn't removed—because of his despotism and because of his cruel treatment of the Indians that was ruining the colony. Finally Peter Stuyvesant started religious persecution of all who did not belong to his own church, the Reformed Dutch.

Meanwhile intercourse was going on between the English and the Dutch—some friendly, some not so friendly. Both claimed the Connecticut River. In 1633, van Twiller sent some of his men with "six kettles, eighteen knives, one sword blade . . . some toys," to buy back a tract of land and set up a trading post where Hartford now stands. He called it the "House of Good Hope," but his hope wasn't realized.

When the English heard of it, Governor Winslow of Plymouth had



BROAD STREET, NEW AMSTERDAM, N. Y., 1663

a frame house prepared and sent men to carry it by ship around to the Connecticut River. As they sailed up stream, the Dutch at the new fort challenged them. The English went cheerfully past, and a few miles beyond, set up the first English house in Connecticut, at Windsor.

The final blow to the Dutch came when Charles II of England calmly gave his brother the Duke of York the whole of New Netherland. To the north, Connecticut was in the hands of the Puritans. To the south,



DUTCH HOUSE, 1667

Lord Baltimore laid claim to Dutch estates. The West India Company's slogan had been, "Colonize the place somehow and give the company the lion's share." As a result, though the controlling power was Dutch, the colony was made up of people fresh from many places. Even in the time of Governor Kieft eighteen different languages were spoken there.

In 1664, the Duke of York sent a fleet into New Amsterdam Harbor and demanded surrender. The colonists had long been discontented. They knew that their English neighbors were getting a squarer deal. Death stared them in the face if they put up a fight they knew to be hopeless. So they begged Peter Stuyvesant to accept the Duke's terms. And, mastering his own impulse, the fiery Peter who had lost a leg fighting for the Dutch in Spanish waters gave up the city. New Amsterdam became New York.



BERGEN HOMESTEAD, ABOUT 1690, FLATBUSH, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

New Amsterdam seems to have been slow in getting started. Perhaps the leisurely nature of the Dutch had something to do with it. Also, there was no great incentive to personal achievement for the rank and file of the colonists. They were little more than servants of the company. They were forbidden to own land, to manufacture goods, or to engage in any kind of trading.

One of the first things Minuit had done was to build a fort. Then he had started a quarry from which the stone was taken for the first real building in New Amsterdam—the company's storehouse. This, they say, had a thatched roof and "crow-step" gables. (See p. 90.)

Along the meadows of the East River, the company had started well-stocked farms, called "bouweries." Yet so much thought had been given to trading and fighting with the Indians, New Amsterdam was still a little town in Stuyvesant's time, bounded on the land side by a twelve-foot stockade running across the island—on the site of the present Wall Street.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

However, within the wall were now real houses. They were mostly of stone and brick, as in Holland. There, buildings were often four and five stories high. Following the home tradition, New Amsterdam had the highest buildings in the colonies.

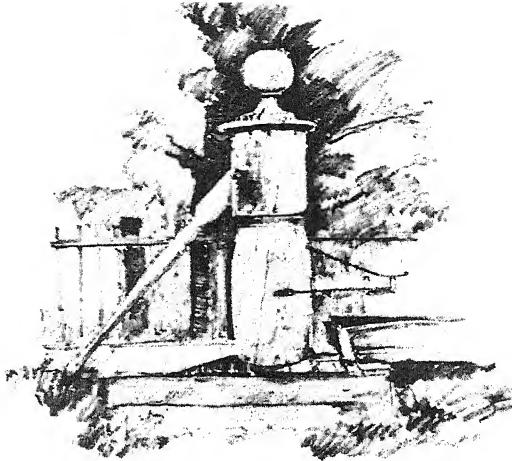
As in the old French quarter in New Orleans, the owner often had a shop on the ground floor, and lived with his family upstairs.

Whitehall Street was the most elegant part of the city. It was named for Peter Stuyvesant's town mansion. With "checker-work" fronts and quaint gables made quainter by crow-steps, the high peaked houses looked down on the harbor. Usually the house stood with the gable end on the street. Behind it was a gay flower garden, and behind that an orchard with many kinds of fruit trees. A wide hall ran through the house, entered from street or garden. At the front was a formal parlor. At the back was the "great chamber or family room."

Probably most of the wealthiest citizens had farms in some part of New Netherlands. Peter Stuyvesant's bouwerie was way back in the country north of the city gates. It was a huge estate on the East River. His house was a large one of Dutch architecture. It had square chimneys of stone and diamond-paned windows. It was surrounded with gardens and orchards.

A very special tree grew there. The old warrior had brought it with him from Holland when he returned to live under the English flag. It was a pear tree and it seemed almost symbolic of the bloodless surrender of New Amsterdam. It lived for two hundred years. The little city grew. Finally the Dutch pear tree stood alone, the last of the orchard, and still bearing fruit at the corner of Third Avenue and Thirtieth Street.

Unfortunately none of these original New York houses is standing today. The experts even tell us that there is no real Dutch colonial architecture in America. Anyway, delightful wooden-shuttered houses



DUTCH WOODEN PUMP, AFTER PHOTOGRAPH

built by Dutch descendants many years after New Netherland became a colony of England are still standing. Most of them are found in New York state and in New Jersey.

Often their roofs are of the gambrel type. Indeed this kind of roof is frequently called Dutch. Yet our earliest example of it is on the English Cradock House in Medford, Massachusetts.

Often the roof line curves down and projects way beyond the building. It reminds one of the roofs in the French quarter of New Orleans which protect the passerby from sun and rain. Sometimes the overhang, supported by slender columns, becomes the roof of a porch.

Along the Hudson and Hackensack rivers are many of these houses built of stone. They frequently have wooden gable ends. These, like the roofs, protect the old-time masonry from the weather. The stone was there right where the houses were built. Probably the heavy work



LOTT HOUSE, ABOUT 1800, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

was done by Negro slaves, for there were many of them on the great estates in New Netherlands brought here by the Dutch traders.

If we owe, in part, to the Dutch the curse of slavery, we also must thank them for much of the romance and gayety in our background. There were so many places both North and South, where the slaves were a happy and happiness-making part of the household. And these leisurely Dutchmen loved a good time, too. They brought to the New World the customs of colored eggs for Easter, St. Nicholas, now our Santa Claus, and the celebration of New Year's Day.

The wooden-shuttered houses still show the quiet and leisurely pace of old New Netherlands. The old West India Company would feel at home in them, even today. What would they think of the rushing man-made canyons of new New York?

CHAPTER IX

THE SWEDISH COLONIAL TRADITION

THE Swedes came to America by way of Holland, so to speak. Peter Minuit, the Dutch governor, found a way to return to America in the desire of the Swedes to share in the New World. With Oveneriern, prime minister for Sweden's young queen, he organized a secret expedition, half Swedish, half Dutch (staked equally by the two countries), and sailed two shiploads of colonists across the ocean and up the Delaware in 1638. Defying his own countrymen at Fort Nassau, he built a Swedish settlement where Wilmington now stands and called it Fort Christina, in honor of the queen, daughter of the famous Gustavus Adolphus. Minuit did not live long to enjoy his new honors. He disappeared in a return trip to Sweden and is said to have been shipwrecked.

Peter Hollander came back in Minuit's place, bringing more Swedes and their cattle and farming implements. They bought land from the Indians all the way up to Trenton Falls. A later governor, Printz, established his headquarters at Tinicum Island, where he built a fort, a house, and a church. The house was a mansion, so called, very fine, "with an orchard, pleasure house, and other conveniences." The important people in the colony followed Printz to Tinicum Island, but the Swedes started other settlements besides. They built forts at the mouth of the Schuylkill and at Kinsessing, now within the limits of Philadelphia, and Printz himself built another at Salem Creek. In addition, the town named Upland was started where the Caleb Pusey House, said to be the oldest house in Pennsylvania stands today, but it was built after the coming of William Penn.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

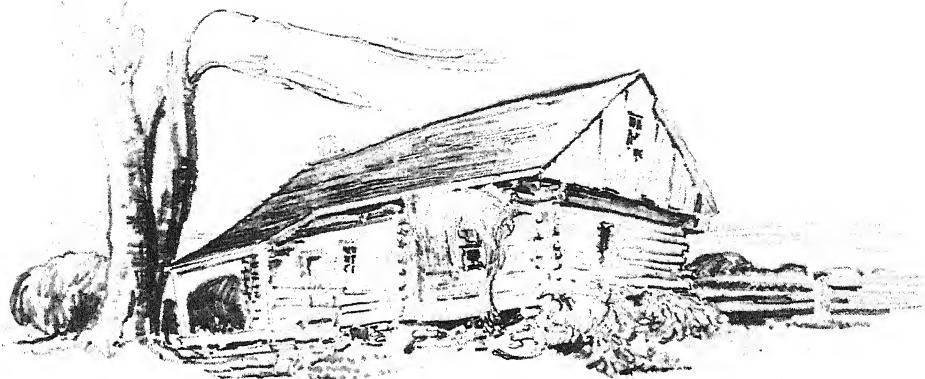
Though most of the Swedes were farmers, of course they, like everybody else, began trading with the Indians for furs. In fact, Minuit started that—with the colony. Their success attracted the attention of some young English settlers from New England, who had bought land from the Indians both east and west of the Delaware, and had set up shop on their own account. The Swedes, however, had no difficulty in driving them out. By the time Printz had built all his forts, Fort Nassau where the Dutch West India Company kept a garrison, didn't count for much. The Swedes controlled the Delaware.

This was too much for the Dutch, and when Peter Stuyvesant became governor of Manhattan Island, one of his first orders was to drive out the Swedes; so the next move in this game of checkers was made by the Dutch. Just below Fort Christina, they built Fort Casimir.

This turned the tide. Things began to go badly for the Swedes. Indeed, they felt their own government was deserting them, and asked to be taken under the protection of Manhattan.

Something had to be done, so the Swedish government offered to confer "alodial nobility for himself and heirs" on any who would settle in its colony. Printz (nicknamed the Indian equivalent of "the tub" because of his four hundred pounds and his drinking habits) returned to Sweden, and Johan Rising was sent to America with a man-of-war. He captured Fort Casimir, but his triumph was short-lived. The very next year, Peter Stuyvesant and an overwhelming force sailed up the bay. He took Casimir and then Christina largely by force of numbers and bluster. In 1655, Rising gave up this last and first fortress of the Swedes on the understanding that the colonists might retain their homes and remain as Dutch subjects.

Of course all along Dutchmen had been there, for it was a Dutch-Swedish trick played on Manhattan in the first place. It was not surprising that a number of families from New Amsterdam now moved down



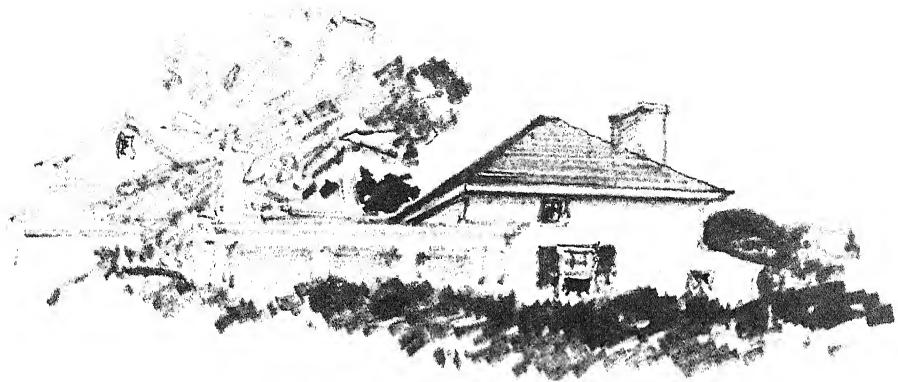
SWEDISH LOG CABIN

to Fort Casimir and started another Dutch-Swedish settlement, which shortly came under English control and became New Castle.

The history of this time and place is mostly a record of bloodless battles between colonists whose mother countries were supposedly at peace. The Dutch surrendered to the Swedes, then the Swedes to the Dutch, and finally both Swedes and Dutch to the English, who consolidated all gains.

Unfortunately no houses remain, apparently, from the days when the Delaware Valley was a Swedish colony. It is the more unfortunate, since they are said to have been of log construction, a Swedish method of building. We are told there was a church of logs at Fort Christina in 1646; also, that in Kinsessing there were log houses made of "good strong hickory two stories high."

The Swedes became a part of Penn's colony and some of their first log houses were still standing in Revolutionary Days. The British soldiers took them down to use for firewood.



ROBINSON HOUSE, NAAMANS, DEL.

Churches called Swedish remain in Wilmington and Philadelphia but they were built after the coming of English colonists. Also there are a few houses in the Delaware Valley built by Swedish colonists.

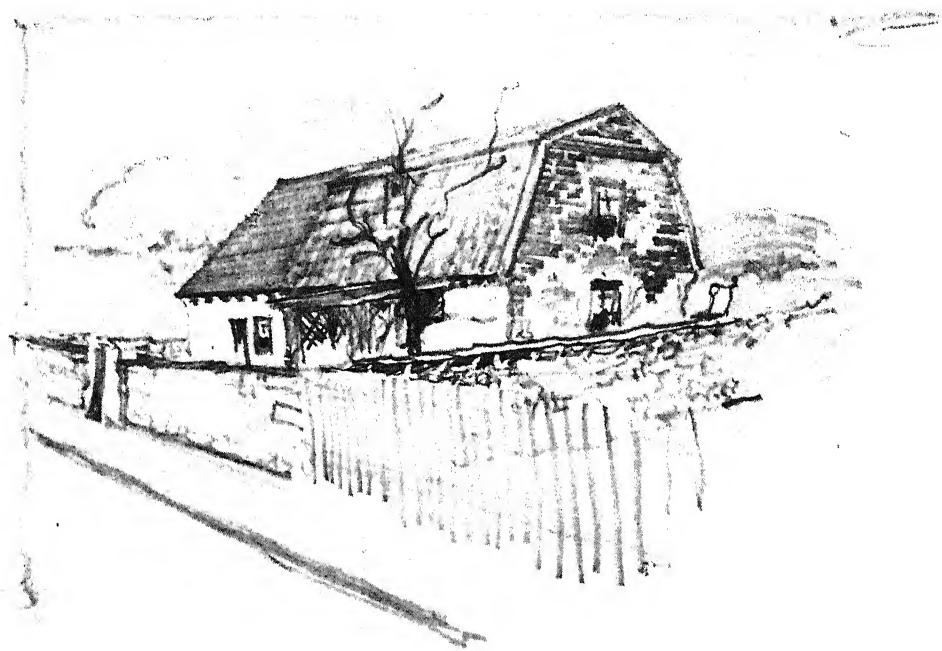
At Naamans Creek, Delaware, a blockhouse still stands. According to tradition, it was built by Governor Rising as a fort, it was fired on by Peter Stuyvesant, and captured both by the Indians and the British. Today it is an out-building in the yard of an English-colonial house, now become an inn. Both the "Swedish" blockhouse and the English dwelling house have taken an active part in the history of the Delaware Valley. They have known, among many interesting people, "Mad Anthony" Wayne, General Washington, and Lafayette, friends of Colonel Robinson, who was born there.

However, forty years and more before Penn's colonists arrived, the Swedes along the Delaware built a shelter that was a real house. They knew how and they found the materials at hand to apply their knowledge. The English and Dutch didn't know much about forests. The

THE SWEDISH COLONIAL TRADITION

Dutch didn't have any, and the English forests usually belonged to the huge estates of the gentry and nobility and couldn't be used freely by the common man. But the Swedes were familiar with forests. They knew a tree when they saw one and knew what to do with it. They had been doing it for a long time. They felled the trees, cut them into logs of the required length, laid them horizontally, notched at the corners, and set one above the other to the desired height, the joints filled with clay.

To the Swedish colonists is given the credit for building the first American log cabin. It was a good idea. It cleared the land for planting when the trees were cut for houses. Anyone could see the advantage of it. It has been used in one or another variation from the early days down to the present, wherever man has thrust himself into the forest.



CALEB PUSEY HOUSE, UPLAND, PA.
OLDEST HOUSE IN PENNSYLVANIA. WM. PENN HELD COUNCIL MEETINGS HERE

CHAPTER X

THE GERMAN COLONIAL TRADITION

WE are told that Printz, governor of the Swedish colony, was himself a German nobleman, and that there were a number of Germans among his colonists. It appears that German soldiers fought in the army of Gustavus Adolphus.

However, the regular German settlements were founded much later and religion seems to have been the leading motive for the coming of the Germans. In 1683, we find a little band of people from the lower Rhine leaving by way of London to join Penn's colony in America.

Some were called Mennonites, but most of them were Quakers. Pastorius, their leader, had preceded them, and when they reached Philadelphia, he had already arranged for the purchase of a large tract of land.

In his cave (for he was living in one of those primitive shelters), the colonists drew lots for their individual farms. Then they set out along an Indian trail to build their log houses in a settlement called Germantown.

This was the beginning of a great immigration, which included groups of many religious sects from the Rhine provinces. One of the most interesting of these, however, did not enter the country in the usual way through Philadelphia and Germantown. The people of the sect were called Moravians; they settled first in Georgia. As missionary work was one of their chief objects, they founded a school for Indian children near Savannah.

Like the Quakers, they did not believe in war, and when war broke out in Florida, they refused to join the fighters. So they went north to



OLD MORAVIAN SEMINARY, 1745-6

Philadelphia and farther north to the Forks of the Delaware. In 1740, they founded Nazareth, where their first house still stands. It is made of hewn white-oak logs, and is called the "Grey House." After a few months, most of the colony moved on. In December of the same year, the first log house was built in a second settlement. Since it was Christmas time, the place was named Bethlehem.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

To a great extent the early history of this city lives in three large buildings which have been left almost as they were originally built. They make up three sides of a rectangle: the "Brothers' House," the "Sisters' House," and, between them, the "Seminary." The courtyard which they form was the stage for community festivals and feast days.

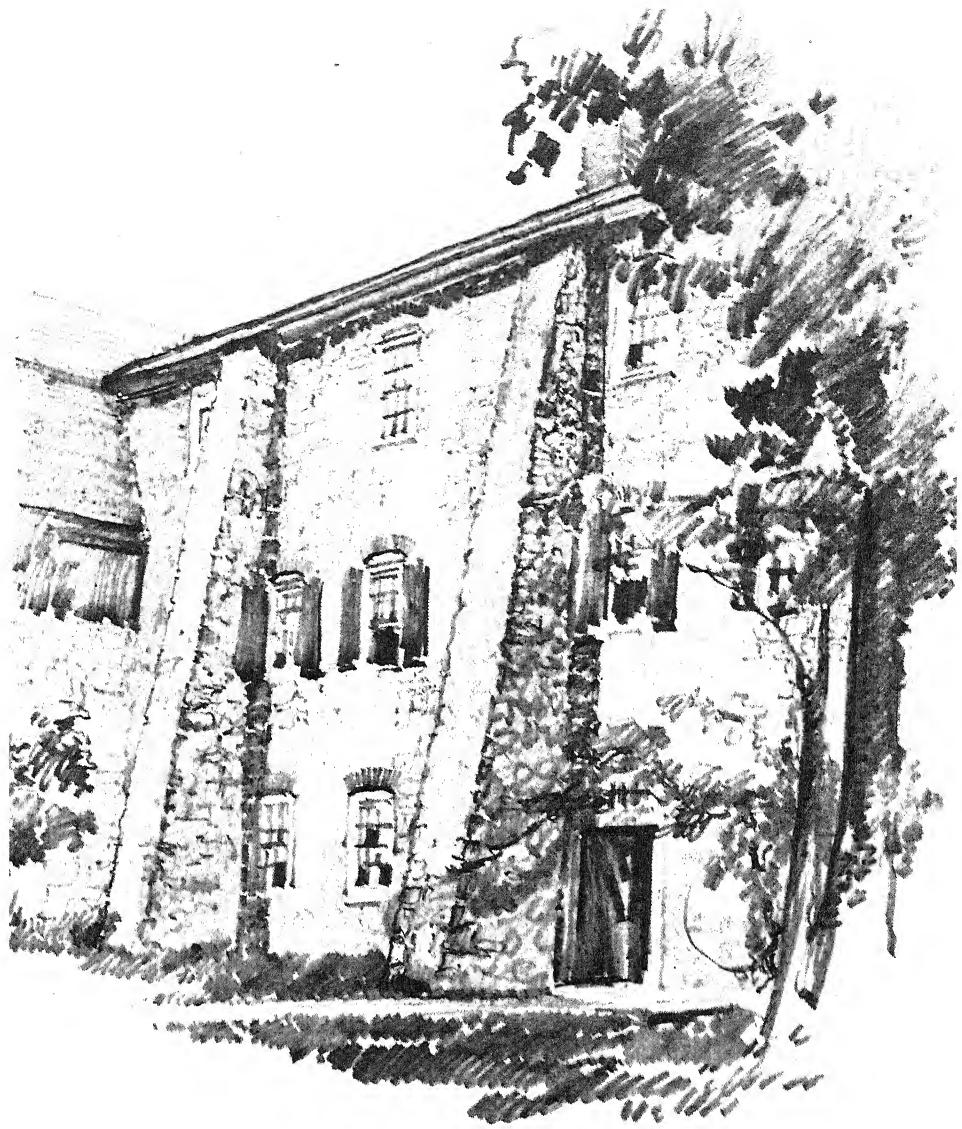
The Brothers' House is the oldest of the group—in fact, it is the second house to be built in Bethlehem. It is constructed of great logs, which are covered now with clapboards. During the early days it was known as the "Gemeinhaus." It certainly must have been a "community" house, for it "served as a home and hospice, manse and church, administration office, academy, dispensary and town hall; the loved place of weary pilgrims."

The names of the buildings suggest the monastery and the convent. Yet the Moravians believed in marriage, in a social life, and in separate homes for family life for those who wished it. However, a band of women lived in the Sisters' House—a band of men in the Brothers' House. Most of the work of the colony was done by the people as a group and any surplus from that work belonged to the community. They called their way of life their "economy plan."

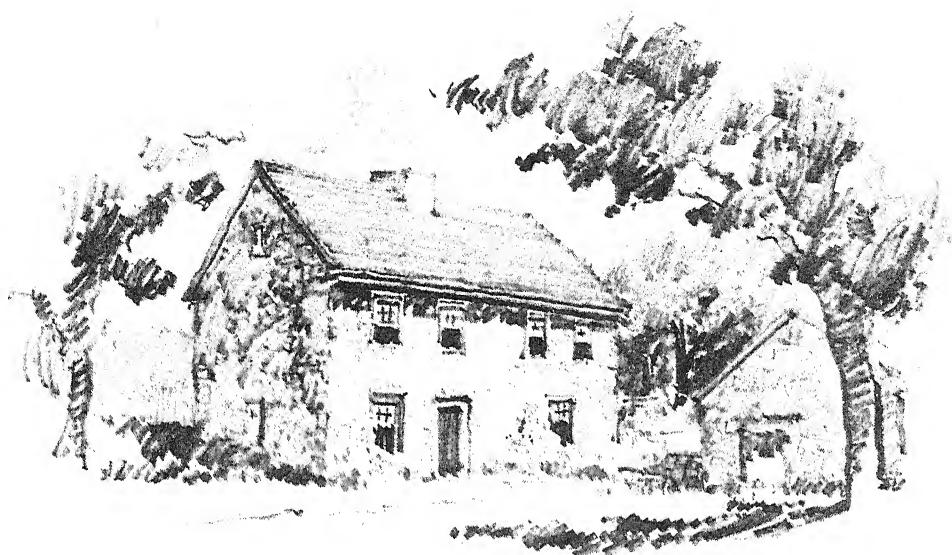
The Seminary, of course, stands for education, and education was a powerful factor in the lives of the Moravians. They believed, too, that women were as quick and as capable of acquiring knowledge as men. Schools for boys and for girls were started with the settlement.

Their educational methods must have been thorough. In carrying on the missionary work begun in Georgia, they studied the ways and language of the Indians. When the sons and heirs of William Penn played false with the red men in the Delaware Valley, the converts of these Moravians were the only Indians who did not join in the terrible uprising against the Europeans.

The Seminary and the Sisters' House are built of native stone. The



MORAVIAN "SISTERS' HOUSE," BETHLEHEM, PA.



OLD KAUFFMAN HOUSE AND SPRING HOUSE
BERKS COUNTY, PA.

buttresses, the roofs, the slanting dormers are said to suggest the home country.

They brought from Germany, too, their great love for music. Music became a part of their daily and religious life. Organizations of young people were formed, such as the Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed and the Order of the Swan. These remind one of the great young peoples' religious movements which are springing up in North America today.

One of the interests of these groups was singing. They were trained as choirs. Choral and instrumental music made lovely the church services and all the gatherings in the community. The Bach Music Festival, a yearly event in Bethlehem today, had its beginnings in the old Moravian courtyard.

In the vicinity of Bethlehem, we find stone houses with wooden shut-



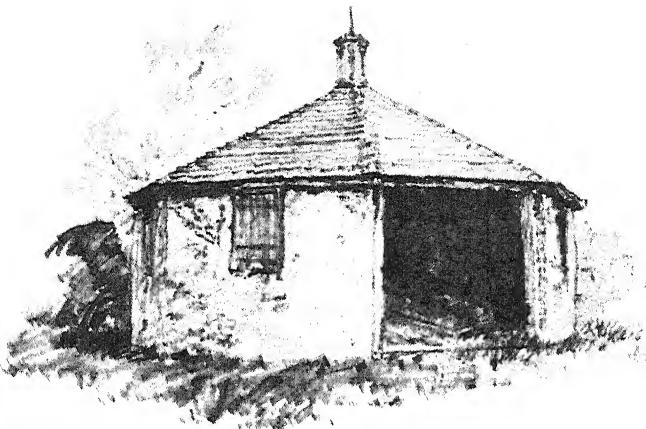
KNABB HOUSE, BERKS COUNTY, PA.

ters. Some of them are the original homes of the early Moravian farmers. They so "belong," in this region, that many modern houses have been built like them. Indeed, it is said that the ordinary observer would find it hard to tell which are new and which are old.

In North Carolina, too, houses and institutional buildings are still standing which were built by the band of missionaries who left the Bethlehem settlement about 1753 and founded a similar communistic community in Salem and its vicinity.

However, Pennsylvania was the chief stronghold of the Germans in colonial days. Of course the Dutch and the Swedes and the English preceded them in the Delaware Valley, but they did much of the pioneering and opened up great tracts of wilderness back of Philadelphia and the Delaware River.

Among the outstanding regions where houses built by the Germans can be found are Chester County near Philadelphia, Lancaster County on the Susquehanna near the Maryland line, and Berks County west of



OCTAGONAL SCHOOLHOUSE, PENNSYLVANIA

Reading. In these places we are especially fortunate, for the barns and outbuildings are standing too.

Though there are fascinating old log houses built by the Germans still standing, probably one reason why so much remains is that these colonists so often used stone. Even the smoke and spring houses and bake ovens were of stone. Wooden pent eaves and pent hoods (characteristic of the region near Philadelphia) are commonly used, and these, too, on the barns and outbuildings.

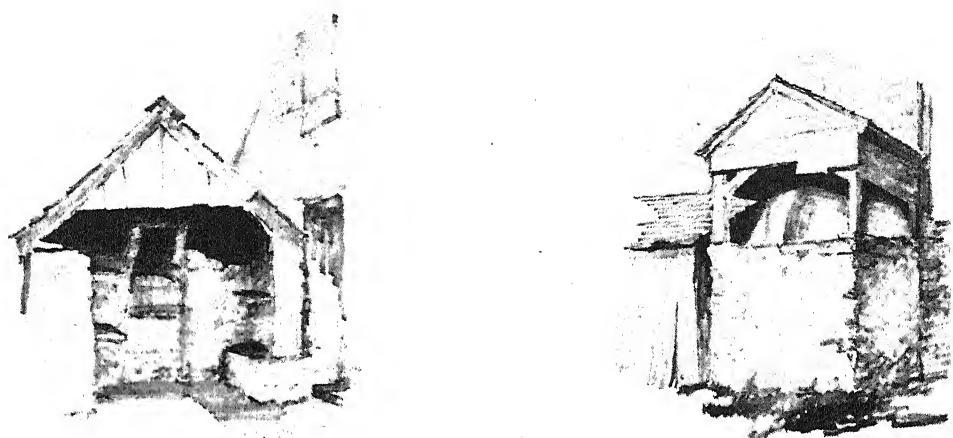
Very likely another reason why these various buildings remain is that the builders devoted themselves to their missionary work or to their farming, finding what relaxation they needed in their religion. They were quite content on their isolated farms or in their self-contained communities. They left affairs of state to Philadelphia.

On the other hand, Germantown became closely associated with the English, though it is said to have been a distinctly German place down to Revolutionary days. Each family had its farm buildings, gardens, pasture, and woodland, but here farming was always a side issue.

From the start, the colonists devoted more time to the crafts which



WASH HOUSE
PENNSYLVANIA



BAKE OVENS, PENNSYLVANIA



OLD BARN
PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSES IN AMERICA

they had learned in Germany. These craftsmen worked first in their homes or in little shops in their own yards, carrying their products on horseback to be sold in Philadelphia. Soon they had built up a famous trade in linen and yarn. As the City of Brotherly Love grew in wealth, summer homes were built in Germantown. As wealth increased in Germantown itself, its people built English mansions, too.

Profoundly interested, like the other German pioneers, in education and religion, many of them mingled with the leaders in Philadelphia, and became themselves leaders. The first protest against slavery came from Germantown. The first paper made in America was made in Germantown. The first book on pedagogy was published there, and the first religious magazine.



BRICE HOUSE, ANNAPOLIS, MD.; BRICK EXAMPLE

CHAPTER XI

THE ENGLISH COLONIAL TRADITION

CAPTAIN John Smith's adventurers set the type for the South: gentlemen's sons. With indentured white servants and later plenty of slave labor, they could live on a grand scale the life of leisure that they loved. Their great plantations and forest land provided the means for outdoor exercise and sport dear to the Englishman. The large mansions built on English models were centers of hospitality. Usually they had two equally imposing entrances. One was on the landward side, the other on a terrace above gardens which extended down to the

HOUSES IN AMERICA

river's edge. The families went from one plantation to another in a coach and four, by horseback, or in boats rowed by Negro slaves. Many of the planters had city homes where in winter they could enjoy a more concentrated social and cultural life. This was outstandingly true of the planters of South Carolina, who went to their Charleston homes also for the hottest weather.

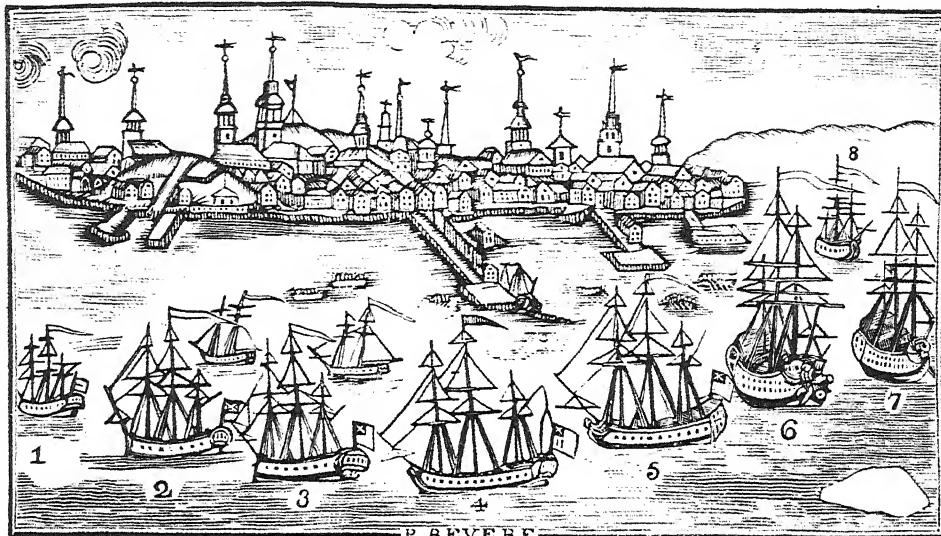
These city houses with lovely gardens in the rear were built near the shore. Their high two-storied, pillared porches and their living rooms high above the ground "to catch the slightest ocean breeze" became most desirable when the swampy land that grew their fortune-making rice and indigo bred insects and disease.

To the north, the royal governors and wealthy men lived much the same life as the Southerners on their smaller estates and in their beautiful town houses. As younger sons, perhaps, of wealthy English families, these men were a powerful factor in the new country. But English wealth and culture were not enough in themselves to make American architecture predominantly their own.

Instead of trying to hold places all over the continent in the beginning days as their rivals from Spain and France did, the English colonists didn't worry very much about what lay beyond their actual settlements. They concentrated on making what they had safe and usable. Even as late as the Revolution, there were only a very few hundred Americans west of the Alleghanies.

The Spanish, broadly speaking, came as personal representatives of their king. They explored, settled, and worked in his name, whether as explorers, colonizers, or mission fathers.

French traders and priests went side by side and both were accepted by the Indians. But throughout most of the country claimed by France, there was no attempt to colonize. French trappers lived an Indian life at their various trading posts.



PAUL REVERE'S PICTURE OF BOSTON IN 1768

The French Huguenots, the finest kind of people for colonization, had been driven from France into England and Holland. In the new country, they threw in their lot mostly with the Dutch in the middle states and the English in Carolina.

However, it was from religion that the thirteen original colonies derived their greatest strength. It was their desire for individual religious liberty, protesting against the religious authority of European kings.

The Pilgrims were a small group, though, it would appear from the continually expanding company of *Mayflower* descendants, of a powerful stock. They were quickly followed by numerous others, and hordes of English men, women, and children had arrived in New England before 1650. Not all Englishmen are alike, and not all who came over here were of the same class and kind. Yet there was a group of traits, discernable in all kinds and classes, which were embodied in the Puritan.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

tans. This enabled them to get together and make common cause against all others, thrusting out all dissenters and nonconformists. In this way, the English settlements in the North expanded and began to exert influence, each in its special way. Houses were erected to mark and consolidate progress.

Roger Williams was driven out for being a free thinker and for believing that the Indians ought to be paid for their land, instead of having it stolen from them. He spent a winter with the Indian chief Massasoit, and then founded Providence. His faith had such might that everyone in his town was free to believe what he did believe and worship God as he saw fit.

Thomas Hooker roused the wrath of the Puritan divines and took a land route to Governor Winslow's seafaring house at Windsor, where, architecturally speaking, he founded the Connecticut Valley. Both Williams and Hooker were English, and the English tradition went with them.

Anne Hutchinson, our first woman suffragist and preacher, became so popular that the orthodox preachers grew envious, and she went to New Netherlands where she was killed in one of Governor Kieft's Indian massacres. Lady Deborah Moody was expelled from the Salem church because she could not accept the doctrine of infant baptism. She helped found Gravesend, a Dutch-English settlement on western Long Island, and as leader saved the colony during an Indian uprising.

The Quakers were persecuted and driven out of New England. They settled in places farther south—many in New Jersey. So the Puritan story goes on: persistence in faith and work making place for itself and excluding all others.

Then, too, the individual's desire for land and liberty could be so easily satisfied that many left the older colonies to start their own when they found the best land taken or wished to try out some social-



TULIP HALL, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MD.

istic plan. So the northern settlements sent offshoots down the coast. Even Charleston, South Carolina, was settled first by people from New England.

Lord Baltimore's settlement in Maryland, founded as a place where persecuted English Catholics could worship in peace according to their faith, and Oglethorpe's in Georgia for English poor debtors to start life anew instead of going to prison, provided the background for successful and lasting colonies.

Probably nobody was responsible for bringing more permanent settlers to this country than William Penn. There were many reasons for his success, among them his assured social position and his influence with the king of England.



A VIRGINIA PORCH

Most important was his own enthusiasm and his high religious zeal. Realizing the misery of the poor and persecuted Quakers whose faith he had adopted, he prepared a comprehensive scheme of colonization and government.

He proceeded upon truly Christian lines. For example, he declared in his written code of laws that the Indians should be dealt with exactly like European settlers.

Persecuted persons from all countries set sail for Philadelphia. The Germans and Scotch-Irish probably came in the greatest numbers, except, of course, for the English. The numbers of those landing in Philadelphia far exceeded the great immigration to New England of forty years before.

THE ENGLISH COLONIAL TRADITION

By and large the explanation of the colonial tradition comes down to this. The English were here in force, backed by the necessity to make good and with the character plus the intelligence to do it. This they accomplished with the co-operation of men and women from many nations who had the same will and purpose.



GARDEN HOUSE, "MONTPELIER," LAUREL, Md.

CHAPTER XII

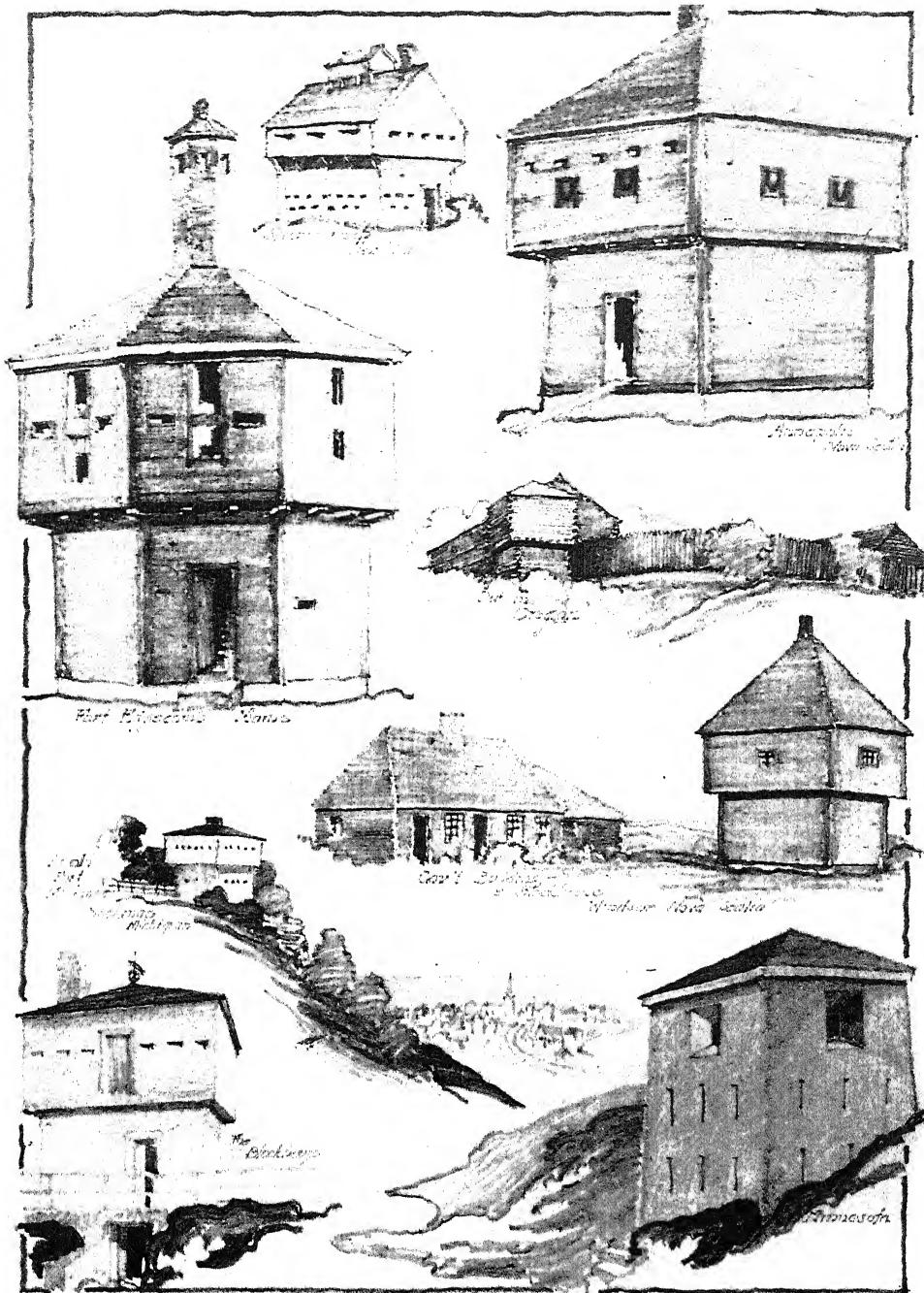
GARRISON HOUSES

LOOKING backward, it is easy for us of today to believe that the colonists' trouble with the Indians was mostly of their own making. Here and there in the country are records or suggestions of savage tribes whose business and delight were war and bloodshed and from whom protection was of the first importance. But by and large the accounts that have come down to us indicate that the Indians were a friendly people, essentially non-aggressive, who would have been glad to co-operate with the newcomers.

It was the suspicion of the colonists, their attitude due to this suspicion, and their frequent inhumane treatment of the Indians that engendered retaliatory attacks by the Indians, and made them traditional enemies where a different treatment might have made them friends. The garrison house, a preparedness measure, was the colonists' answer to the state of mind that might at any moment lead to a state of war.

The garrison house was not born full-fledged like Minerva. It began as a blockhouse built of round or squared logs. It was essentially a fort, and, as such, was built by English, French, Dutch, and Swedes.

The French, like the Dutch, built trading posts to do business with the Indians, but French forts were mostly built as defenses against the English. They were built everywhere in French possessions: Quebec, Montreal, Nova Scotia—from the St. Lawrence River down the Mississippi and its tributaries to the Gulf of Mexico. We still retain in Detroit, St. Louis, Mobile, and New Orleans the names left from the days when the French cut off the English advance to the West and were rivals to the Spanish.



GARRISON HOUSES

HOUSES IN AMERICA

The blockhouse of the fortress type followed the frontier, starting at the coast or river entrances and going inland. After the Revolution, when "westward ho" became increasingly the watchword, the blockhouse passed the French line of forts in the Middle West, and went on to the Pacific coast with the prairie wagons. Meanwhile, the United States government built these quaint fortresses, "Donation Lands," "Soldier's Fortune," and the like, which gradually drove the Indians into the western reservations.

It was the blockhouse as used by the English that evolved into the garrison house. It was built first as a separate unit, for the purposes of defense only, and was surrounded by palisades. Later on it became merely the most strongly constructed and best-protected house (whether of wood, brick, or stone) among those of any given group.

All communities had garrison houses, some communities had several, depending on their size and the number of people to be accommodated. It would not have been easy, however, for the stranger to pick out the garrison house from among the other houses. In the later stage of its development, it followed the pattern, architecturally speaking, of the houses being built at the time. These garrison houses were occupied by families who made their homes in them, the most important or well-to-do families of the place, like as not.

The extra cost of the stronger construction could not be shouldered by many families. Nor was it necessary. The one fortress answered the purpose. The inhabitants could be and were accommodated by that in time of need, and the occupying family or families adapted themselves to the enlarged membership. It was rarely for long at a time. The Indians were a temperamental foe. They attacked suddenly and retreated as suddenly and their sieges were of short duration.

Certain examples may be cited of garrison houses typical or unusual. The Frost garrison house in Eliot, Maine, was one of the segregated



HOUSE BUILT FOR GOVERNOR CRADOCK, MEDFORD, MASS.; GARRISON HOUSE

and palisaded sort. It was of squared logs and one story, designed simply as a place of refuge. Since it was built without a chimney, there was no adequate means of cooking or keeping warm. The lower floor was used for the horses and cattle. There the defenders of the place remained. The women and children were huddled for safety in the attic with its overhanging eaves.

The Damme, another one-story garrison, is now in the center of Dover, New Hampshire. It was moved from out of town and presented to the museum. It stands behind a protecting lattice and from the street you might never guess it was there. It is built of squared, hand-hewn logs with overhanging eaves on four sides. It is a regular house type, but the door is very heavy, and once it could be moved up and down like a portcullis. High in the walls of the first story are little square openings just about large enough for a musket muzzle on the outside,

HOUSES IN AMERICA

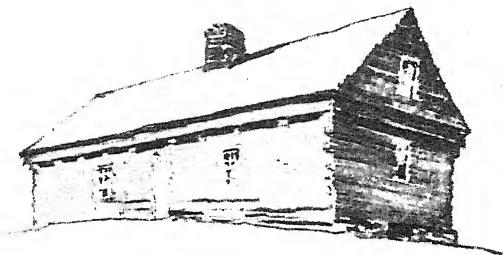
but splayed to give space for free movement of the gun on the inside.

The house has a central chimney and fireplaces. Against the chimney and opposite the front door, a tiny staircase goes up a very few steps and then divides into two smaller staircases to the attic under the rough rafters.

Of the two-story wooden overhang type New Hampshire has the Gilman House built in Exeter in 1655-7, while Maine—again leading (as it always does the nation at election time and as it did New England by its date of first settlement)—has the McIntyre garrison house dating from 1640. Hingham, Massachusetts, on the other hand, has a garrison house harder to find. The Andrews-Lincoln House of the lean-to type does not proclaim itself as a fortress. But the Cradock House in Medford does. It has been known as the Old Fort for generations, and has been considered by many the garrison house par excellence.

However, some years ago the Medford Historical Society published the good news that the relations between the Indians and the settlers along the Mystic had been particularly friendly. Very likely this famous garrison house was never used as a garrison after all. But other data collected in Medford has been a bit disturbing to the pride of this part of the state. For years the *Boston Transcript* carried in its Strangers' Directory the following: "Cradock House, Medford. Built 1634, the first brick house in the colony." Now we are told that the house was not built before 1670, and more confusing still, that it is the Peter Tufts House and not the Cradock House at all. Perhaps a new student of old maps and records is already discovering new information. Perhaps we shall read: "The *Transcript* was right. It is the Cradock House."

Generally speaking, the garrison house followed the pattern of other houses, changing with the changing pattern. Beginning as a log structure, in the log-cabin period, it went on to the two-story design when

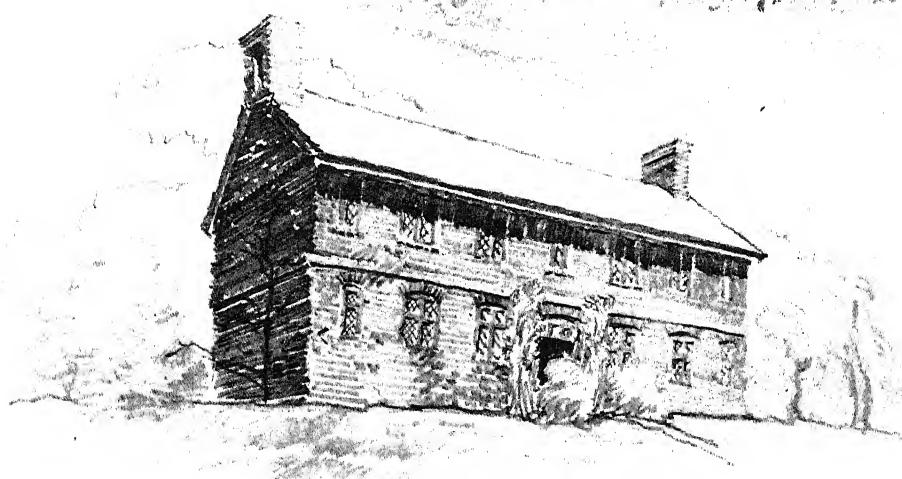


GARRISON HOUSE
DOVER, N. H.

LITTLE ALTERED EXCEPT FOR
ENLARGED WINDOWS

(WOOD) GARRISON (ALSO WITCH)
HOUSE, SALEM, MASS.

(BRICK) GARRISON HOUSE, HAVERHILL, MASS.





GARRISON HOUSE, ROCK VILLAGE, MASS.

two stories came into vogue, as well as into brick and stone. It didn't differ in the larger elements from the common run of houses, though in detail it often did. The windows might be smaller or placed higher in the walls. In this way, the people who had taken refuge there were safer from Indian arrows. When the projecting second story came into use, it was used like the old blockhouse as a vantage point and watch tower. In the second story, as in the first, there were loopholes, and sometimes in the overhang there were floor boards which could be lifted. In this way, the defenders of the house could shoot their enemies or put out fires, for the Indians used fire in their warfare.

Because they merely modified an existing pattern, garrison houses, though significant for their time, can hardly be said to have contributed anything to our architectural tradition.

CHAPTER XIII

PLANS

PROMETHEUS was the first housekeeper. He stole fire from the gods and gave it to men who gave it to women who set up housekeeping on the strength of it.

A house plan began around a fireplace. At first it was one room and one fireplace. The room varied in size and shape and the fireplace in its location. The Indians had a round room, the tepee plan, and built the fire on the ground in the middle of it. Some of the early settlers did the same thing. Others built the fire against the earth wall of the cave or dugout. But as soon as the first primitive ways of living had passed, they built a regular fireplace and built the room around it. It was a big fireplace. It had to be, because it had to do all the cooking and keep everybody warm, at least on one side.

As the family grew—or became more modest, or as the community became more elegant in its ways of living—other rooms were added and new houses enlarged the pattern. With the added rooms, came added fireplaces, one to a room. With the fireplaces, came the necessary chimneys, and chimneys, more than any other one thing, controlled the plan of the house. It took a lot of doing to do the chimneys well, and the early householders were interested to do a good job.

Imagine Paul Revere, had he been born twenty years earlier than he was, dropping up on Beacon Hill to look over the John Hancock House as it was building. It wouldn't have taken him long to see that it was a good house. But he might have hinted that it was easy to make a good plan for it, because the best way to do the chimneys had already been worked out in similar houses that had come before.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

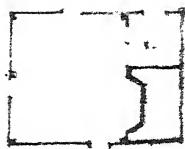
The well-placed chimneys of the early builders are strong contributing factors to the good plans and so to the good houses that have come down to us. The increase in the number of rooms, extending the chimney problem as it did, resulted in the basic good plans still in use today.

The development runs something like this: first the one room with its single fireplace at one end. Then two rooms, one above the other, the single chimney serving for the fireplaces in both, with a square staircase in front of the entrance and backed up against the chimney (the beginning of the center-chimney type of plan). The addition of two more rooms, one on each floor, came next, making a four-room house, all fireplaces still accommodated by the one big chimney in the middle.

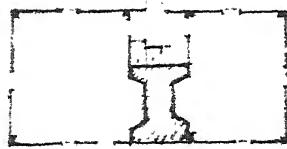
At the stage when they had one room on each side of the chimney on two floors, they slid the rear roof down to the height of the ceiling of the first floor and tucked rooms under it—usually three. They called this a lean-to.

About this time, wishing to have a hall that ran through the house, it became necessary to split the one big chimney into two and put them between each pair of rooms, front to back, for both stories. At the same time they were building in wood, they were also building in brick and stone, and these materials carried the chimneys to the ends of the house. Here, single, as in the Short House at Newbury, or double as in the Royall House at Medford, they became part of the outside wall, and carried off the smoke from either center or corner fireplaces. There were minor variations of these plans, but in all cases the fireplaces were of prime importance.

Today, if we like, we needn't have even one chimney in the house. But a body without a backbone is a flabby sort of thing, and a house without a chimney is just as flabby. In any case, and with or without

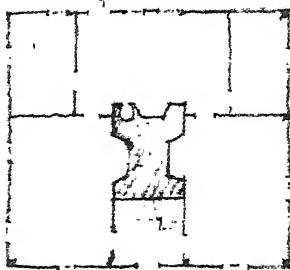


A



B

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EARLY FIRST FLOOR PLAN

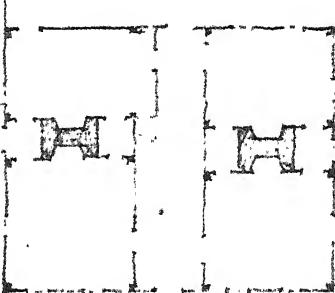


C

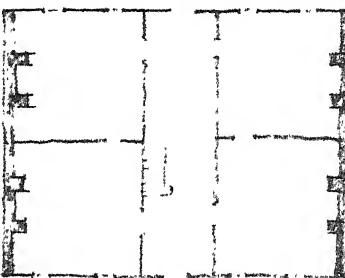
The typical house began with one room & one chimney A. Added a storm B & sometimes a 2nd floor. Dropped a shed roof (of jeans to) after added space on 1st floor C. Put two 1st floors together with a hall between D.



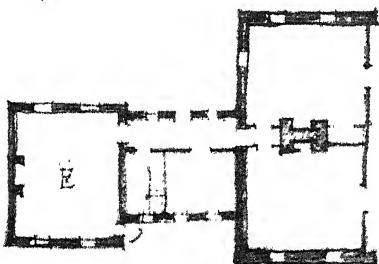
Brick ends & 2 Chimneys



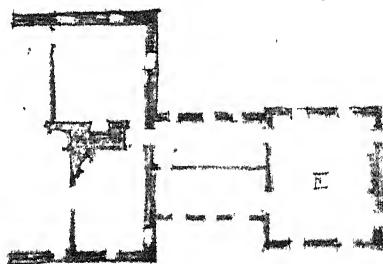
D



Brick ends & 4 Chimneys



The usual Southern House was built of brick or stone & had wings E.



HOUSES IN AMERICA

chimneys, the plan must answer the purposes of living as the first plans basically did.

Some experts will tell you that if they see the plan of a good house, they can tell you what the exterior looks like. It is an exaggerated statement, but it contains some truth. First, and most important, a good house is a good house not only in its parts but as a whole. Next, good houses fall more or less into groups, plans along with the rest of the house; and certain kinds of plans are associated from long use with certain kinds of exteriors. In addition, the material of which the house is constructed shows in a proper plan: that is, a wood wall is thin, a brick wall thick, and a stone wall thicker. So it is not difficult for an expert in houses to say from the plan of a good house that the exterior is good, has the characteristics associated with a certain kind of house, and is built of wood, brick, or stone, as the case may be. Saying more than this is strutting or romancing.

Plans always go back to the way people live in a given place at a given time. And people haven't lived very differently, in essential matters, from age to age. Everything is rooted in background or tradition and the ways of living are rooted deeper and stronger than most things.

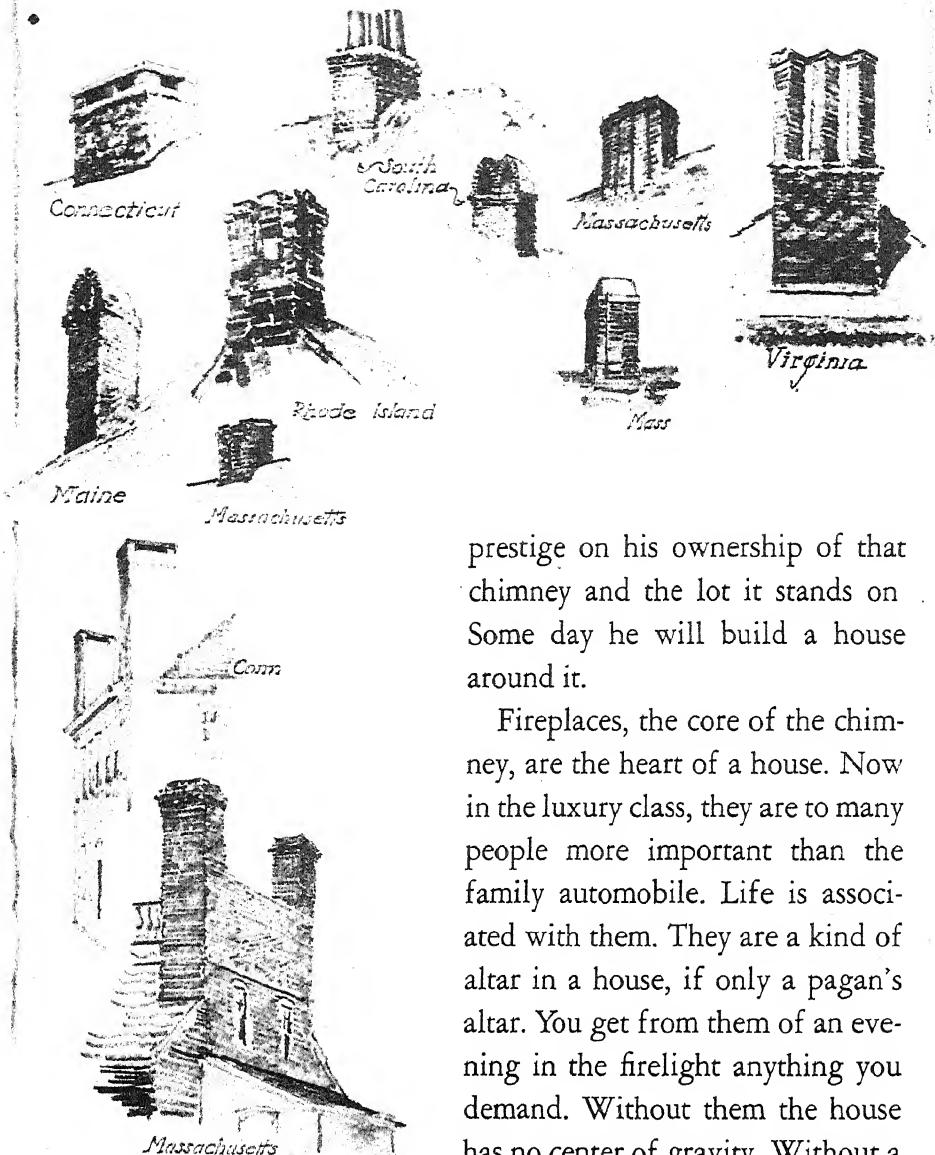
CHAPTER XIV
CHIMNEYS

CHIMNEY tops have flourished in all places where people had gayety enough to run up to a height and wave a flag. The top of a chimney is the flag or flagpole of any house. The first chimneys along the eastern coast were built of logs and thickly plastered with mud. They didn't persist long. The fire hazard was too great, in spite of specially appointed "chimney viewers." Laws were soon passed which forbade the building of them.

Later, chimneys were built of all the materials that were used in walls. Brick and stone, used in the natural or plastered, were commonest. In the South and Southwest, the other wall materials were other things besides—materials such as tabby, adobe, coquina.

Chimneys were built sometimes to form part of the exterior walls, and sometimes to stand alone; occasionally they were large and massive enough to stand alone even when a part of the walls.

Exterior chimneys are a source of interest in any house when function has dictated their form. You put a chimney outside, as a rule, because you haven't room for it inside. Placed there, conspicuous as it is, you must make it interesting. Interest begins with the bulges made by the fireplaces which are built into it. These given, you have to enclose them in a mass that evolves by way of ramps and buttresses and shelves and projections into a thing of rugged beauty. A good chimney, old or new, is something to be proud of. A man down in Connecticut is proud as Punch over a chimney. The house it went with burned down long ago, but the chimney stands intact and lovely. He bases his claim to social



CHIMNEYS
 (CONNECTICUT, MAINE, MASSACHUSETTS,
 RHODE ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA, VIRGINIA)

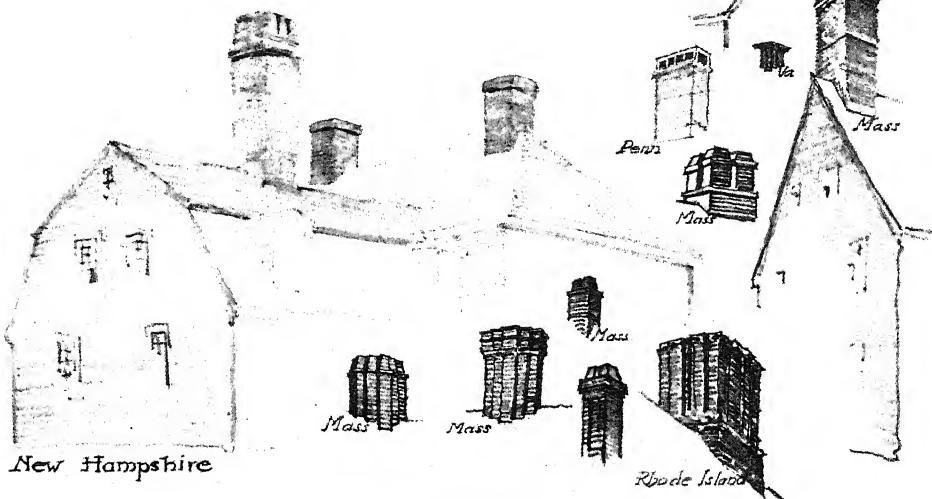
prestige on his ownership of that chimney and the lot it stands on. Some day he will build a house around it.

Fireplaces, the core of the chimney, are the heart of a house. Now in the luxury class, they are to many people more important than the family automobile. Life is associated with them. They are a kind of altar in a house, if only a pagan's altar. You get from them of an evening in the firelight anything you demand. Without them the house has no center of gravity. Without a fireplace, after you get through at the dinner table and before you go

to bed, you keep moving restlessly about till you get tired. A fireplace gives you a place to stop and a place to rest.

Fundamentally, a fireplace is anything that holds a safe fire, anything from a big hole in the chimney wall to a marble-encased wrought-iron grate. A modern fireplace may be only a reminiscence, but even as such it gives you its associative benefits.

The oldest fireplaces were kitchens in themselves. They not only warmed you but fed you. They were filled with the implements of service, from brick ovens for beans or bread and tin kitchens for roasts, to Dutch ovens for food that cooked more quickly, and toasters for browning and



CHIMNEYS

(CONNECTICUT, NEW HAMPSHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS, RHODE ISLAND, PENNSYLVANIA, VIRGINIA)

HOUSES IN AMERICA

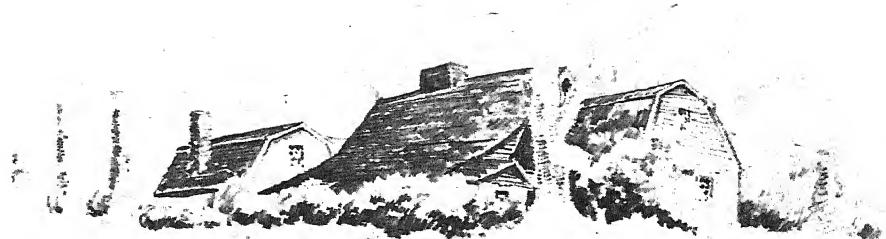
burning things, and the hundred and one lesser cooking tools.

Later, fireplaces became smaller and of less universal use. With diminishing size came more decorative treatment. Columns supporting mantels took the place of plain brick or plaster facings. Proportion became a study in itself, related to the room no doubt but no longer a result of *function*, of use for practical household requirements.

English chimney tops and pots are things they write books about, and our own chimneys are reminiscent of the English ones. They vary with the parts of the country and the mind of the builders. And they didn't flourish everywhere. Some of the tops in New England are as tight as a bank. Elsewhere in New England, they flourished like a green bay tree. And they flourished in the middle states and in the South. You would expect them to flourish in the South, for the South is elaborately hospitable and the elaborate chimney top is an invitation, a hand of welcome.

Chimneys will remain with us a long time, in spite of modern tendencies; but one glory has departed forever from them: the chimney sweep. Our contrivances for cleaning flues today are just contrivances. Sweeps humanized the business and gave an air of personality to chimneys, as occupants do to houses. They were kin to witches, who frequented chimneys, too.

The old-timers seeing them emerge black with soot from the flue tops, with their selling cry of "Sweep, oh!" called them crows, and the Dutch gave them steps to descend by. Maybe the disappearance of crow-steps from the Dutch gables discouraged the sweeps to death.

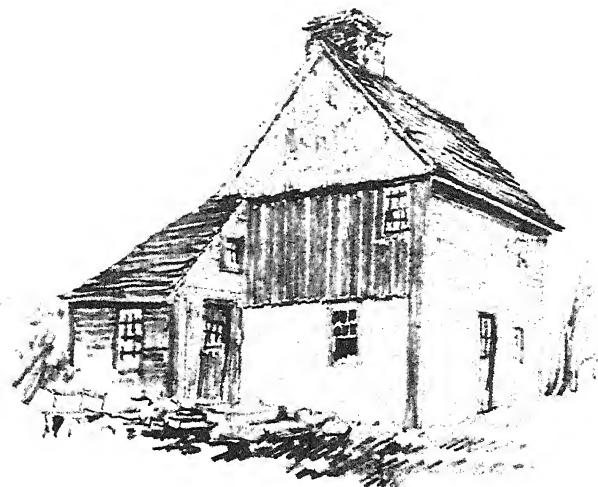


FAIRBANKS HOUSE, 1636, DEDHAM, MASS.

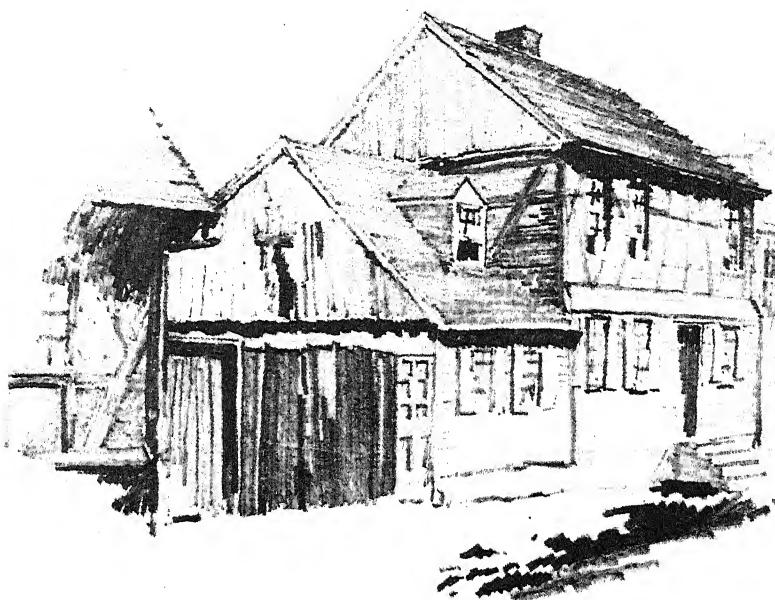
CHAPTER XV
EARLY HOUSES

EARLY houses can be found in various parts of the country, but most of the wooden houses still standing are in the North. In the South the early wood houses were used at a later period as slave quarters and allowed to go to pieces. But wood, as it turns out, is a pretty good material, a durable material. As a proof and a popular example, we have the Fairbanks House in Dedham, Massachusetts. This has stood from 1636, probably the oldest wooden house in the country. It is built of white pine, and it still has its original covering, clapboards. The house was built in the days when they called them "cloveboards." That means these clapboards were split by hand. The house itself is a combination of houses, in effect, and the variety is carried out even in the windows. Of eight front windows, they say no two are alike.

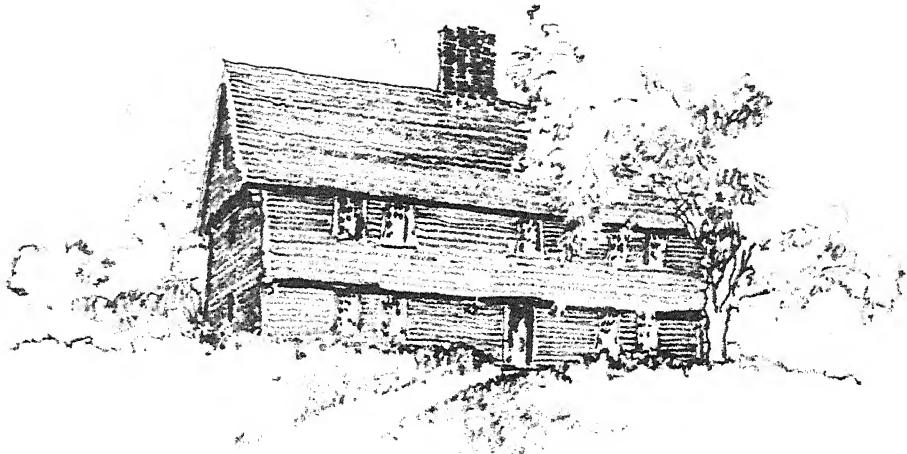
Wooden houses remain, while most of the masonry houses of a later date have gone to pieces. This can be explained partly by the kind of



EARLY CONNECTICUT HOUSE



EARLY HALF-TIMBER WORK, PENNSYLVANIA



PARSON CAPEN'S HOUSE, TOPSFIELD, MASS.

people who lived in them. Usually owners took care of their houses themselves, and usually one house was all they could afford to build. More elaborate houses were cared for by slaves, even in the North in the early days, and carelessness with fire can destroy even houses of brick and stone.

Another reason for the long life of these wooden houses is the way they were put together. The builders followed the English model, as they remembered it, of course. It was called half-timber construction in England. Sometimes, it is called that here. Sometimes it is called Gothic, and sometimes medieval—it depends a good deal on who's doing the calling. Whatever you call it, it was solid enough to come down through three centuries.

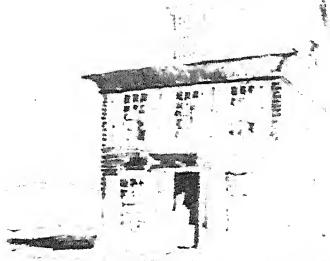
The big members of the frame—the corner posts, sills, girths, "summer beams," plates, and so forth—were big, indeed. Nowadays, we are careful to make our frames no bigger than they have to be to carry the load, which is another way of saying, as small as the law allows.



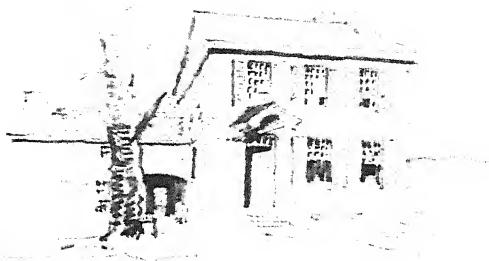
EARLY SOUTHERN VILLAGE HOUSE, VIRGINIA

The old fellows, and many were skilled craftsmen, just went into the forest and took the first good tree they found, cut it down, squared it up with a broad ax, and pinned it together with oak pins in sections of the right length. They did this while the parts were lying flat on the ground. When they had two sides ready, they called in the neighbors, and the sides were pushed up into place and the end members pinned to them. The trusses also were made on the ground and raised. After that, they passed the cider and doughnuts around and maybe had a dance. It must have been fun.

When the rectangle of the house was in place, they fitted the smaller parts of the framework into the big ones at their leisure. Sometimes they filled the spaces between the framework with brick, leaving holes for the windows and doors. They put boards and clapboards on the outside of the walls, and boards or plaster (or plaster and boards)



WILLIAM PENN'S HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA, PA.



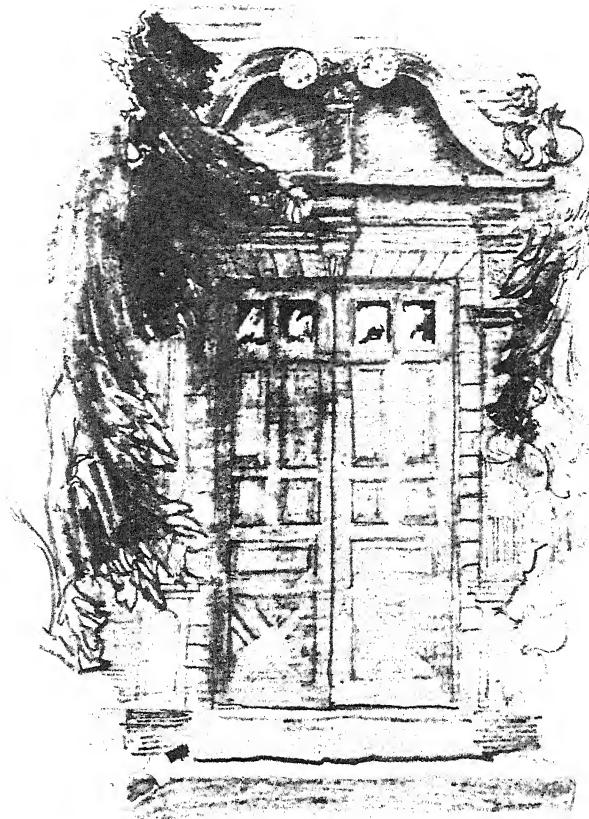
WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS
VALLEY FORGE, PA.



EARLY HOUSE IN ANDOVER, MASS.

on the inside. Mostly boards, for they didn't have much plaster in the early days. They sent to England for the glass and solder which made their diamond-paned windows.

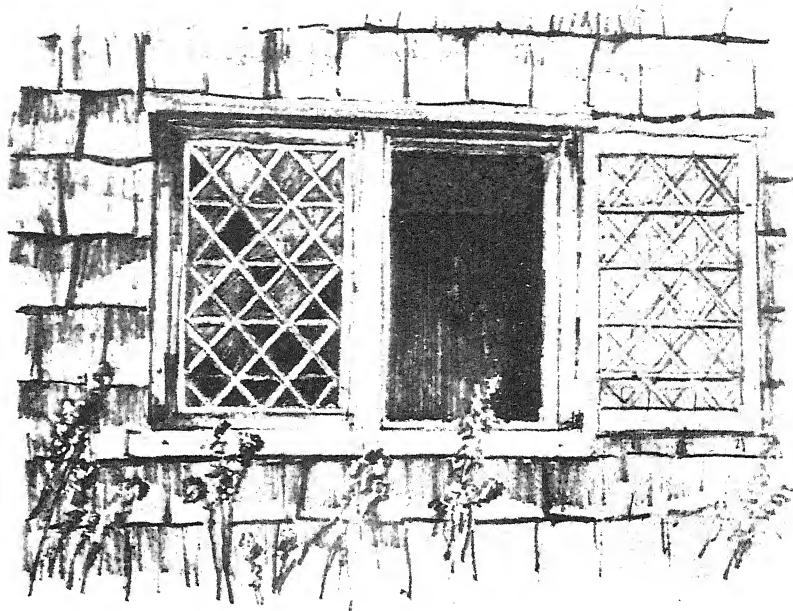
The settlers built wooden houses wherever they went, and wherever they built them the houses had local characteristics. But they were all built to last. The plans for them didn't differ much at any given time,



TYPICAL CONNECTICUT VALLEY DOORWAY IN NATURAL PINE
(WITCH PANELS AT BOTTOM)

but the details differed a great deal. Indeed, they differed so much and in so many ways that the study of the differences would fill a book—or two or three. Such a study is chiefly of interest only to the person who is interested.

New England has one characteristic detail that can be spotted anywhere by anybody: the overhanging upper story. No other section of the country has any example of this. It was used variously. Sometimes the second story overhung all the way round; sometimes on ends or



LEADED CASEMENTS COMMON IN EARLY HOUSES SHOWS SHINGLE DETAIL.
JETHRO COFFIN HOUSE, 1686, NANTUCKET, MASS.

sides only—one or both; sometimes on one end and one side; sometimes the gable ends overhung, sometimes they didn't. When the gable overhung and the second story too, they called it a double overhang. They had a lot of fun playing with the idea. It came from England, mostly. It is very picturesque and New England is proud of it.

Over in Connecticut, they built many of these early wooden houses, but over there the overhang apparently embarrassed them. Maybe they were practical-minded and couldn't see the use of it, or maybe they were ashamed of it. At any rate, they pulled it in and in till at last it became nothing but a big molding running along the front or perhaps around the house.

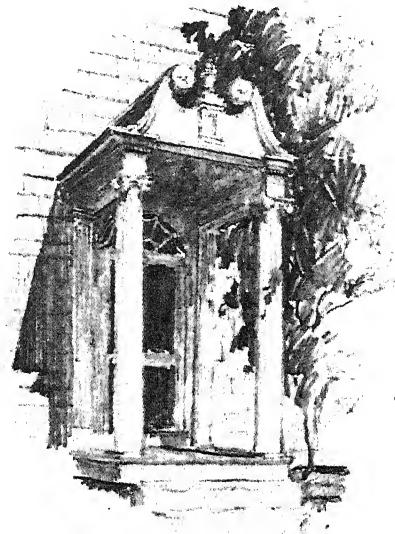
They did one thing in Connecticut and up the river which marked the houses as theirs. That was the entrance doorway. In eastern Massa-

HOUSES IN AMERICA

chusetts, doorways were mostly small and tight. You had to duck to get into them, like as not. The Connecticut Valley must have influenced the settlers into greater hospitality, or maybe they were broader-minded. Maybe their broad-mindedness took them from Massachusetts Bay. Anyhow, their doorways were liberal of invitation and gorgeous to look at.

The doors themselves were wide and sometimes double. Frames around them were rich and strong, crowned usually with heavy broken pediments, a pineapple set between the volutes. They breathe hospitality to anyone except the witches, and the settlers put crosses on the doors to keep them out.

These early houses were built of pine which was allowed to weather, but the later wooden houses were mostly painted either white or yellow. The early houses had high pitched roofs and gabled ends. Later, houses had roofs that were hipped as often as they were gabled. Stories were low and, in spite of the high roofs, these early houses hugged the ground.



PRESERVED IN A MUSEUM IN DANBURY, CONN.



MARIA MITCHELL HOUSE, NANTUCKET, MASS.

CHAPTER XVI EXAMPLES OF EARLY HOUSES

THE House of Seven Gables in Salem was made famous by Hawthorne, who was a relative of the Ingwersols who owned it. He had an inside knowledge of the people and the place. The iron toaster is still there which was used for his benefit. So is the huge fireplace where it was used, with the rest of the cooking implements, the brick oven and the iron bar in use before the day of cranes.

The large combination dining room and sitting room was called "the hall," an English term, by the Turners who built the house in 1662-1669. Hawthorne's relatives called it "the keeping room."

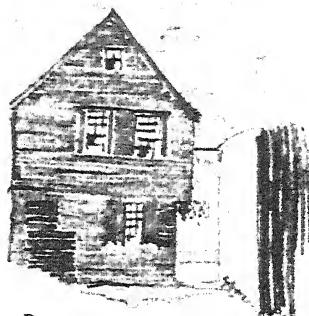


DEAN WINTHROP HOUSE, WINTHROP, MASS.



COTTAGE AT MARTHA'S VINEYARD, MASS.

PAUL REVERE HOUSE (RESTORED)
BOSTON, MASS.
BURIED IN NORTH STREET



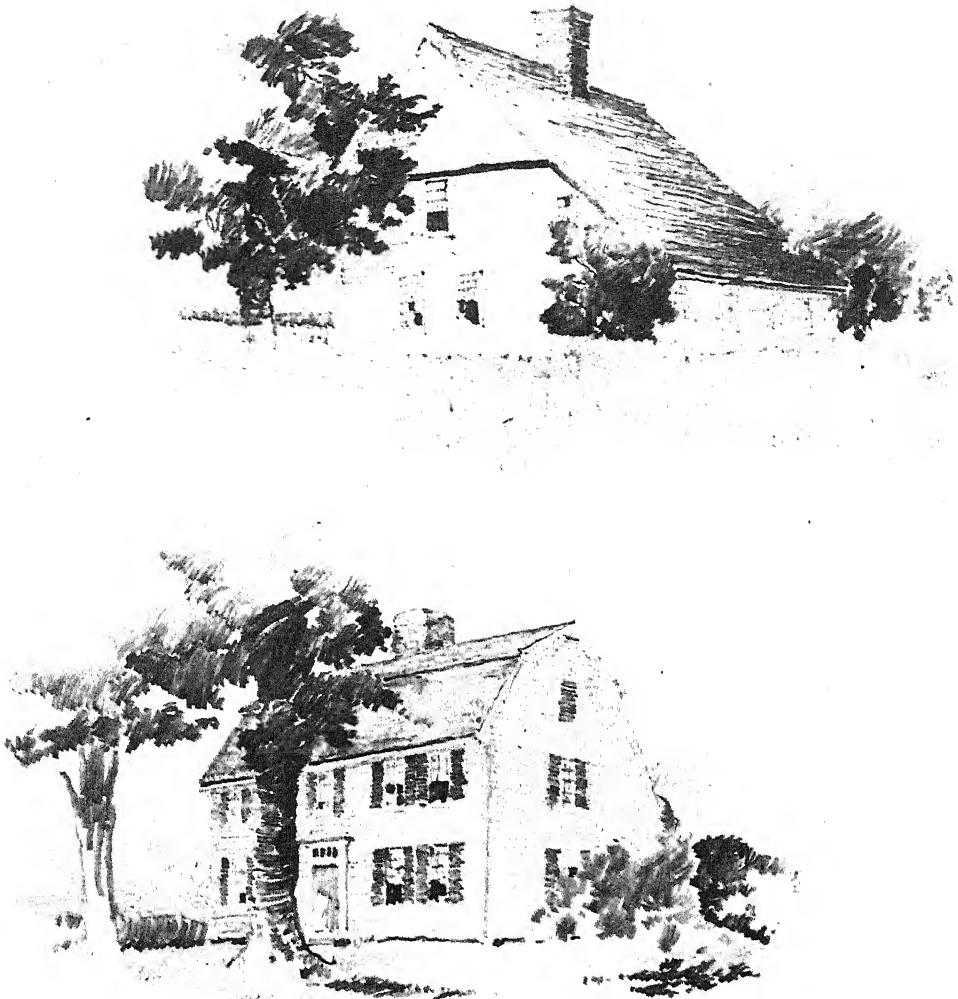
BACK VIEW OF ELL



FRONT



HOUSE OF SEVEN GABLES, SALEM, MASS.



TWO COUNTRY HOUSES IN CONNECTICUT

There is a secret staircase leading from a closet in the living room, up along the great chimney, and lost in the paneling of an upper room.

Outside, the house is surrounded by the ever-growing city, but is still preserved intact with its separate counting house, its grape arbor, and



EARLY TOWN HOUSE

its well-kept garden from which you can still get a view of the harbor.

The house in Saugus, Massachusetts, known by almost as many names as there are kinds of overhangs, was built even earlier than the Salem house. It is called "Broadhearth," "Scotch," "Iron Works," "Boardman." Two of these names, at least, refer to the special use that was made of the place in colonial days when it was a lodging house for laborers in the Lynn Iron Works.

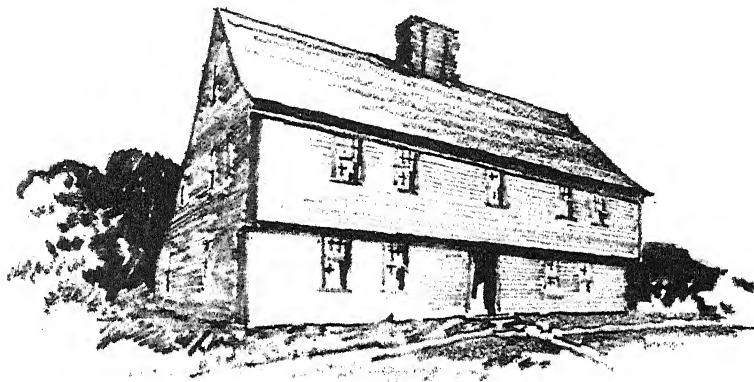
Many of these laborers were Scotch prisoners of war taken by Cromwell and sent to the Colonies to work out their freedom. This took

HOUSES IN AMERICA

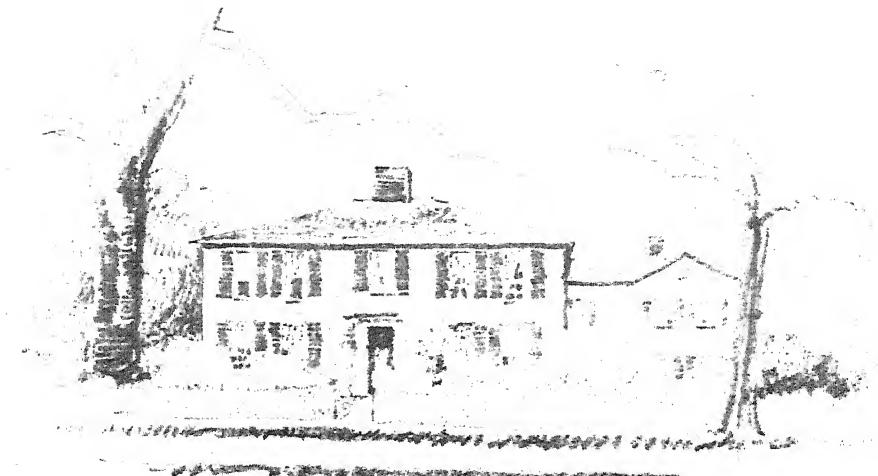
from five to eight years and then they were often given grants of land on which to build new homes.

Paul Revere did not build the house he lived in. It was built in 1676, a long time before he was born, but his living in it made it famous, caused it to be preserved, and ultimately led to its being restored.

It was Longfellow who made Paul Revere famous, as every schoolboy knows. His ride was glamorous, but he should be known as well for the work of his hands. He was an artist in pewter and silver and a bell maker. He made locks and weather vanes, he was an etcher—even a dentist. He made the copper plate for the State House dome in Boston. He had two wives and a lot of children. In general he was not only a patriot, but a significant citizen of his time.



SCOTCH IRONWORKS HOUSE, SAUGUS, MASS.



HARRINGTON HOUSE, LEXINGTON, MASS.

CHAPTER XVII

LATER HOUSES

PEOPLE get proud as they get prosperous, and when they get proud, it's sure to stick out somewhere. It is a pride that is not necessarily reprehensible. It's a pardonable pride. It sticks out in our houses, and registers itself there for our neighbors or for posterity.

The early houses of our country were pretty crude, a large part of their beauty lies in their crudeness. At any rate for us of today it does. Our ancestors, who built them, became aware, it seems, of their crudeness, forgetting the beauty of them. Or maybe it was a housekeeping instinct. Maybe to their minds, the crudities were dirt catchers, and they developed a desire to smooth up the rough places. Certainly it is conceivable that as the women's dresses got more elegant, it became in-

HOUSES IN AMERICA

creasingly abhorrent to them to drag the skirts—long skirts they were then—over a sanded floor, or have to raise them ankle-high above it. There must have been a good many spitfire remarks, too, as dusters caught and held in the rough places of hand-hewn timber.

The houses of the Seven Gables type are not more clearly identified by the overhang of the exterior than they are by the picturesque character of the interior walls. The design of these walls was not a conscious process. Nobody took a pencil and drew them out, as we sometimes imitatively do today. They just happened. They resulted from the way the house was put together, and from the materials used. The outside of the house had to be made weatherproof, but inside, the walls sometimes and the ceilings always exposed the crude construction. The huge girths and girders and “summer beams” supported the structure, and were there to be seen while they did it. Herein lay the interest of these old interiors, and herein the irritation to the people, especially the women, who lived in them. Their growing pride—remember we called it a proper pride—demanded something better.

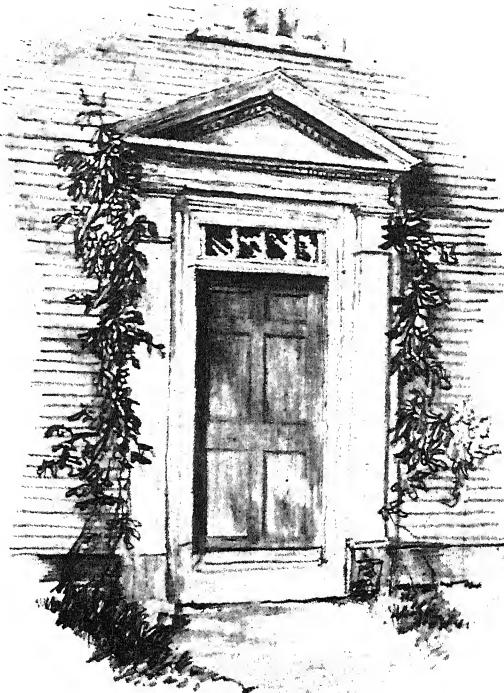
What did they do about these offending timbers? They covered them up. When Mrs. Jones’s new house was built, she had the rough beams nicely encased in smooth boards, and plaster as well as wood used on the walls of the rooms and sometimes on the ceilings, and she had moldings placed to cover the cracks where the wood and plaster met. Maybe it wasn’t all due to Mrs. Jones; maybe Mr. Jones had something to do with it. Maybe he was proud; too.

The chimney walls were always of wood, and these also were made more refined. The wide boards were beveled and beaded at the joints. Later the bead was elaborated into a molding. Both bevel and molding were carried across the top and the bottom of the boards, gradually evolving into regular paneled walls. Big moldings were made to encase the fireplace and smaller moldings to form panels above it. The sand

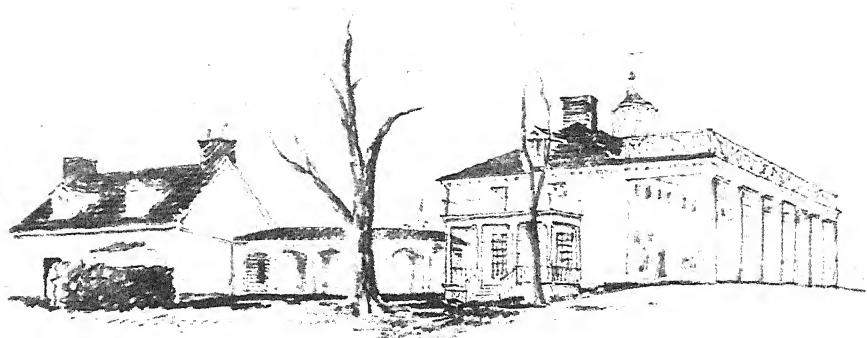
LATER HOUSES

was swept permanently from the floors and wide boards were substituted.

The pace set by Mrs. Jones and her husband was followed by their neighbors. This good example spread to the pacemakers of other towns and villages, until we had an advance in elegance and refinement throughout the colonies.



A. NEW ENGLAND DOORWAY



MOUNT VERNON

CHAPTER XVIII
EXAMPLES OF LATER HOUSES

PRIDE, proper and ridiculous, is always a strong factor in the preservation of antiques. We preserve old things (and new) because we are proud of them. Sometimes the things themselves are good; either intrinsically, as silver and other precious metals or stones, or as works of art. Sometimes they are of no other value than as objective testimonials to a vanished grandeur. Sometimes they are things not only bad in themselves but testifying to unfortunate events, better forgotten in the history of our past. Pride is undoubtedly one of the forces at work in the preservation of our old houses, but pride alone would not have done it, as with some other old things which are preserved.

The old houses that have come down to us were and are good in themselves. They needed nothing beyond their own merit to justify their continued existence. Nevertheless, we are grateful for the stories con-

EXAMPLES OF LATER HOUSES

nected with them, which help to fix them in our minds. These are concerned not only with the individuals who built or occupied them but with one or another aspect of the life of the time.

The Governor Dummer House takes its point of pride from the political side of life, as a governor's house is likely to do. A governor's house is always pointed out to us even today and there are few of us who don't take at least a glance at it.

This former colonial governor must in himself have been worth looking at. He was what was called in his own time, "a gay dog." He had the position and affluence to support the title. He was young and handsome enough to win as wife a daughter of Governor Dudley, cavalier enough to build her a new house, and sportsman enough to build it in the country. His father had already in 1713 given him the tract of land in Byfield, a pleasant and suggestive name, and it was two years later that he built the mansion.

This was their summer home, for they had a brick house in Boston on School Street. He attended the Hollis Street church, and he gave the church a Bible, a not unusual gift in those days. The Bible is still preserved, its rich color and richer gilding only enhanced by time.

Maybe the gift had something to do with his marriage. We don't know what the preacher's perquisites were then. When he took his bride to the new house in Byfield, he gave an elaborate housewarming. To mark the occasion and make it memorable in history (or to cut a caper that was in him) he performed a feat that has come down to us in the records. In full regalia and mounted on "a magnificent white charger, he dashed up the beautiful staircase to the second floor," frightening and scattering his elegant guests. Is it possible that the recent Crown Prince of Germany had been reading American history when he matched this example on the wide front steps at Potsdam? There are no horseshoe prints on the treads of the staircase, but if you



MACPHRAEDRIS-WARNER HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

are in the house during one of those August months in which there are two full moons, you can hear—and maybe see—the ghost of the governor repeat his ride on the midnight of the first full moon.

The house, a fine example of the time, is still beautiful and in active service, not as a governor's house now but as a principal's. The gov-

EXAMPLES OF LATER HOUSES

ernor started a notable school for boys, and the old mansion is the center of it. Numerous other buildings, dormitories and the like, have been built up around it, but the old building, both by location and artistic supremacy, easily dominates them all, an excellent example of the domestic architecture of its time.

The Macphraedris-Warner is another house of the time touched with the pride of wealth and political prestige. The two men who gave the place its name were members of the King's Council and both were Tories at heart. The first, Captain Macphraedris, father-in-law to the second, was further a king's man through his marriage to Sarah, a belle of Portsmouth and daughter of a king's governor, John Wentworth.

The house was begun in 1718 and completed in 1725. Captain Macphraedris hailed from Scotland and was already a wealthy merchant when he built the house. He was the chief promoter of the Iron Works at Dover, which were the first of their kind in the colonies. He was very friendly with the Indians and carried on an extensive fur trade with them.

The house was built to last—its walls are eighteen inches thick—and it is furnished and equipped so as to be worthy of that honor. This is one of those houses said to have been built of the brick brought as ballast from Holland. For the most part, there is a tendency today to doubt the European brick tradition, but in this case it may be true. The house was Macphraedris's, the ships were his, and he was Scotch.

Wherever the bricks were made, they are good ones that form this oldest brick house in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. It is of the four-chimney type in plan, the kind that places the chimneys at the ends (built in with the brickwork of the wall), and sends them well above the roof and erects a high square-tipped brick parapet between them. There is a gambrel roof between the pairs of chimneys, topped by a

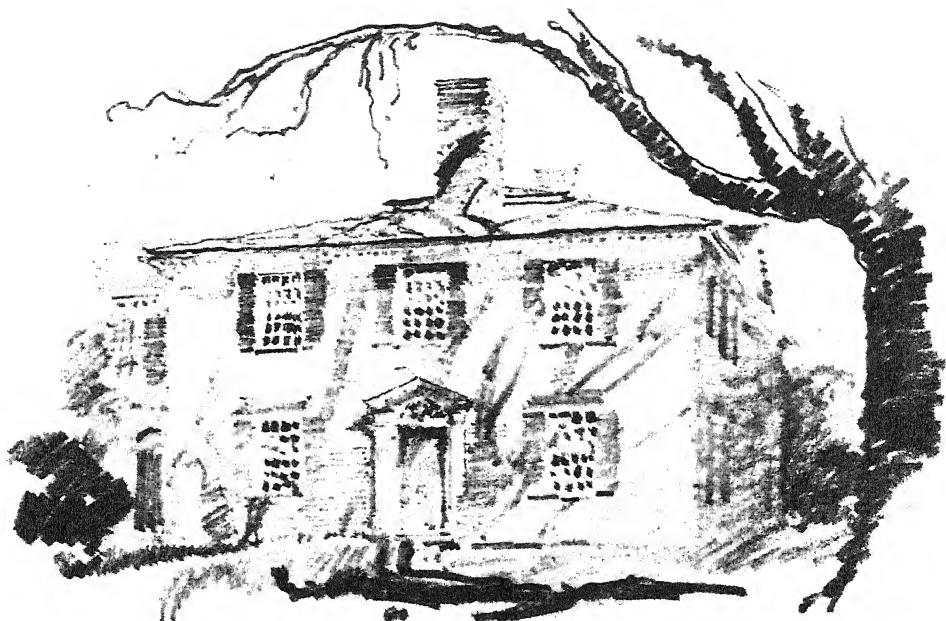


DOUBLE WOOD HOUSE, NEW ENGLAND TYPE

quaint cupola, and a captain's deck the entire length of the roof protected by a balustrade.

Macphraedris was not by any means all Scotchman, for he brought over in his ships much beautiful furniture for his bride. There is a large secret cupboard in the wall paneling for silver and china. When the iron bar at the door is taken down, one enters a hall that runs through the house, and one sees various pictures on rough plaster painted on the wall from the foot of the stairs to the second-story landing. The captain had portraits of his friends, some of them Indian chiefs. There were Dutch tiles in the fireplace, and a Franklin stove, set up, like the lightning rod outside, by Ben himself.

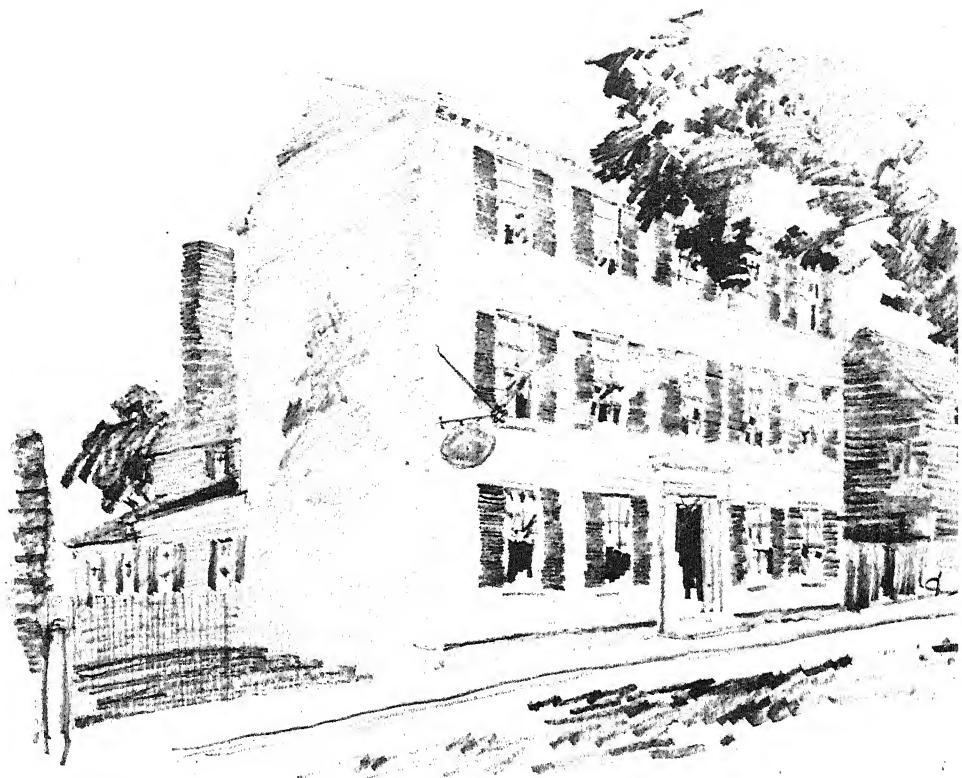
The Honorable Jonathan Warner got the place as well as a wife through marriage with the captain's daughter, Mary. He was important enough in his own right to have his name coupled with his father-in-law's and become identified with the house. His commission as king's councillor lasted until the Revolution, but he always was impres-



VILLAGE HOUSE, CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

sive and attracted in his long-skirted coat, small clothes, and buckled shoes as much attention around Portsmouth when he and his cane went walking as Holmes's "Last Leaf." This gentleman of the first brick house was known as the "Last of the Cocked Hats," and was courteously saluted, instead of laughed at, by the boys of the town.

Not many of the early merchants had pride enough to stretch to two houses in different towns, but one of them did, and it carried him back and forth between the two of them in a coach and four. Both houses are good and might well have come down to our day on their own legs. The one is built in Danvers, Massachusetts, and is called The Lindens

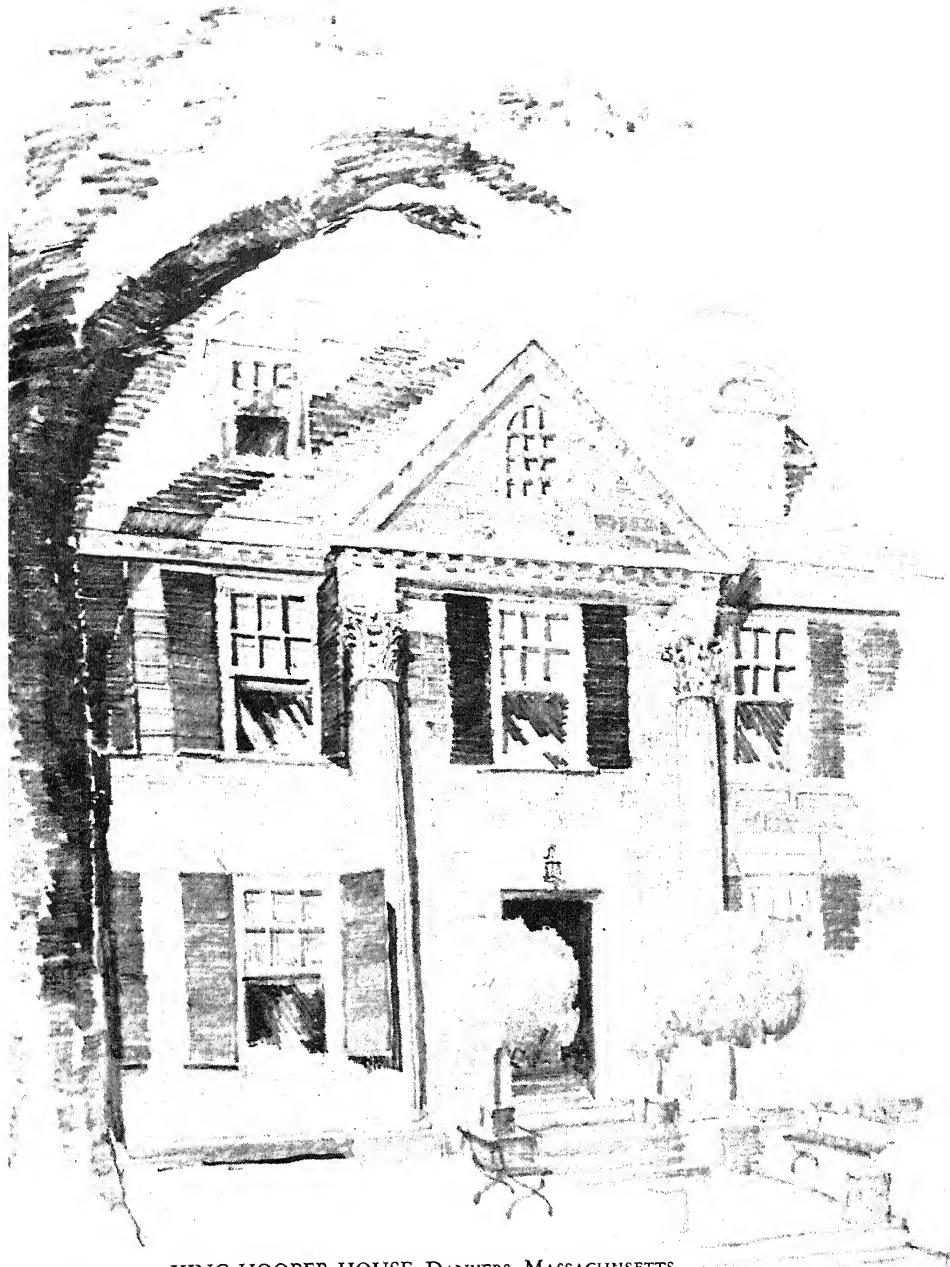


KING HOOOPER MANSION, 1754, MARBLEHEAD, MASS.

or The Collins House. Why not with his own name is a mystery, for the owner was full of pride. The other house in Marblehead bears both his name and title in all their glory. It is called the King Hooper House.

He wasn't exactly a king, unless money makes a king, but he lived like a king and walked, talked, and acted like a king. This was enough to get him called king by the local inhabitants.

Robert Hooper, just plain Robert Hooper, was his name. He was a poor boy and a poor man to start with, but he organized the fish industry of Marblehead, monopolized it, and came at last to be the



KING HOOPER HOUSE, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS



DUMMER MANSION, BYFIELD, MASS.

wealthiest merchant of the place. One house couldn't hold him, he was that proud. Besides he got finicky in his tastes. He got not to like the crooked streets of Marblehead where the turning of so many corners interfered with his dignified carriage, and the smell of fish that made his money for him came to offend his refined nostrils. That is how he came to build his country house in Danvers, where he could have more open and less offensive space around him. And that was his undoing.

The English parliament shut off the port of Boston in 1774, in retaliation for the Boston Tea Party of the year before. The English king designated Salem as the substitute capital and port of entry, and the place to hold the General Court, with General Gage in charge. What more natural than for one king to entertain the representative of another!

EXAMPLES OF LATER HOUSES

King Hooper invited General Gage to live in his palace in Danvers, very near Salem, and to partake of his royal hospitality. General Gage accepted, and the country home of King Hooper became the royal headquarters and residence of the official representative of King George.

The Marblehead subjects didn't like it. Marbleheaders were noted for their out and out independence of speech and spirit and the sarcasm that had given Robert Hooper his title. They abjured their allegiance to their local king and went into a kind of boycotting wrath against him. He lost his business and his property, as well as his prestige, and died as he had been born, a poor man. But his houses have been preserved.



CASEMENT WINDOW, NEW CASTLE, DEL.



HOUSE OF THOMAS WIGGLESWORTH, BOSTON, MASS., 1795
A BULFINCH HOUSE, TAKEN DOWN IN 1859

CHAPTER XIX

STILL LATER HOUSES

THE interest of the crude exposed beams of our early houses is an interest due to detail. We see the construction and the members that make it up. We are fascinated by what seems to be their hit-and-miss arrangement. We are not so much aware of the room as a whole, as we are of its parts. When our ancestors went refined and covered the crude timbers with boards and moldings, the interest in their rooms still remained an interest due to detail. We see the detail before we do the room. It is like not being able to see the forest for the trees.

But there came a time, along about 1800, when the refined finish was not refined enough—or perhaps the old builders conceived the idea of doing rooms that could be seen as a whole. In any case, they reduced the sizes of frame members to the point where they could be entirely concealed within the walls. They now had on their hands a plain bare room devoid of any source of interest except that of the room itself. It became a question of making the bare room interesting. Proportion, an advanced stage in design, was the inevitable answer.

Proportion is an element which achieves satisfying results by few and simple, but subtle, means. It contents you with a simplicity that is interesting, a dignity that is pervasive. It insinuates itself into your consciousness and rests you, like sunlight in autumn.

The rooms in this period were higher than the earlier rooms, the doors, windows, fireplaces were symmetrically placed, the moldings small and delicate. The parts in size, shape, and their relation to one another were carefully calculated to enhance the effect of the whole while remaining inconspicuous in themselves. The ornament, often



AN 1800 HOUSE IN SOUTH HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS
EITHER BY OR FROM THE BOOK OF ASHUR BENJAMIN

very rich, merged into the room as a whole, but when examined in detail and at close range might be found to be of intricate and exquisite workmanship.

The characteristics due to proportion extended to all parts of the house, whether outside or inside, and were applied to all materials, wood, brick, stone, and stucco.

CHAPTER XX

THE FIRST ARCHITECTS

THE later houses of colonial period, built in what might be called the day of proportion, were the culmination or high-water mark of the colonial tradition. There was no decline from that height. The tradition just stopped at the top. It was like climbing a hill, the ascent long and gradual, with only a sheer precipice on the other side. Maybe the tradition had fulfilled itself and was through, till later generations took it up. Maybe it was killed in its tracks, as some historians imply, by the classic revival which immediately succeeded it. Whatever the cause, it passed suddenly into the limbo of things forgotten, and was despised by the people out of whom it had developed.

These late excellent examples of the tradition were built subsequent to the Revolution, some far into the eighteen hundreds. Judged politically, these were not of the colonial period at all, but looked at aesthetically, they were the crown of the entire movement.

The colonial tradition began as a mass business. The inhabitants of all the seaboard settlements were moving in the same general direction. The movement was so strong and the direction so marked that like the strong current of a swift river it carried everything with it. Whatever cross currents appeared were as nothing in the surge of the onward sweep of the torrent. Houses like other things could vary in details, but they had to stick to the general pattern. They couldn't get away from it.

For this reason, no particular individual was required to organize the tradition. Houses happened like mushrooms that can grow only

HOUSES IN AMERICA

in a certain soil and that, growing in that soil, cannot become anything but what they are.

Sooner or later a movement requires a leader, just as a message does a voice. Some one person is so much a part and parcel of the mass that he must stand on his box and orate or put himself in front of the procession and lead. And the procession, tired and a little bewildered by traveling so long and perhaps getting a little fearful lest it lose its sense of direction, is glad to welcome a leader and put itself safely behind him.

This late period of colonial architecture is the period of leaders in the architectural procession. It developed our first architects. It is fitting, therefore, to give some slight account of them at this time and in connection with these late houses.

Charles Bulfinch has been called our first native practicing architect. That is, he was the first architect who devoted his time and energy to that profession as a means of livelihood. The earlier architects so called were builders also. Most of them were excellent craftsmen, and it is due to them in their craftsman capacity that we have so many old good houses. They were not primarily creative designers, and it is doubtful if they often made the plans they built from. Instead they built from the specimen plans in one or another of the excellent handbooks of the time.

Bulfinch was not a builder, nor, so far as is known, even a craftsman of the building trades. He was a designer. He created buildings out of his mind and made plans of them for other people, the builders, to build.

He was born in Boston in 1763, the son of a prominent Boston physician. After graduating from the Boston Latin School and Harvard College, he spent several years abroad in study and travel. Here he measured and sketched the old-world masterpieces, the first to set the example of this sort of professional study so extensively followed by



IN PORTSMOUTH, N. H.



PORCH, ASHUR BENJAMIN

THE FIRST ARCHITECTS

architectural students of today. He returned to and settled in Boston in 1787, and opened an office for the practice of architecture.

He is better known for his public work than for his private work. This, of course, is only natural. He designed the "new" State House at Boston and the capitol at Augusta, Maine. He was called to Washington in 1818 to take Latrobe's place as architect of the national capitol. His houses, like his churches, are to be found here and there and are all excellent examples of his time and style. Though he earned his living by his profession, he found time for other things. As chairman of Boston's selectmen, he did much for the city in regard to drainage, lighting, police, and fire protection, and is on record for widening and straightening the streets. Still famous for its "cow paths" what must the city have been before he got to work! He had a flair for adventure, too, for we read that he was a promoter of the voyage of the good ship *Columbia*, which under Captain Robert Gray, was the first vessel to carry the new American flag around the world. He died in 1844.

Samuel McIntyre has been called the Bulfinch of domestic architecture. He was a contemporary, born in 1757, but he lived in Salem, Massachusetts, and the bulk of the work he did is in and around Salem. This means a lot to Salemites, who will tell you that Salem, next town after Plymouth to be settled, was in his time the architectural center of New England. He was self-educated, but he had the blood and traditions of the craftsman to build on. His father was a craftsman.

He himself was a carver to start with, one of five brothers, all carvers. Later he became a designer in general, and, finally, an architect, a designer of houses. His Salem houses as preserved are evidence, inside and outside, of the quality that was in him, of his fine sense of proportion, his beauty of line, his dignity and restraint in the use of materials.

Ashur Benjamin lived in Salem, too. He isn't mentioned much in the



A MASSACHUSETTS PORCH AND DOORWAY

books about his time, perhaps because he published books of his own. There were five of them. One was *The Builder's Guide or Complete System of Architecture*; another, *The Architect or Practical House Carpenter*. His best book, also a little on the heavy side, so far as title goes, was called, *The American Builder's Companion, or a System of Archi-*



GIDEON TUCKER HOUSE, SALEM, MASS., 1800
SAMUEL MCINTYRE, *Architect*

tecture, Particularly Adapted to the Present-Day Style of Building. It was published in 1806. These books, however old-fashioned they sound, contain the best records that exist of the architecture of the time by a man of the period. He organized the material and made it available to his contemporaries and to later architects.

He was a practicing architect as well, but it appears that he was more or less shouldered out of Salem, his own town, by the superior reputation of the McIntyre outfit, for most of his work is to be found in west-



DETAIL, ASHUR BENJAMIN

ern Massachusetts. Nevertheless, his influence—work or books or both—has been extensive and good.

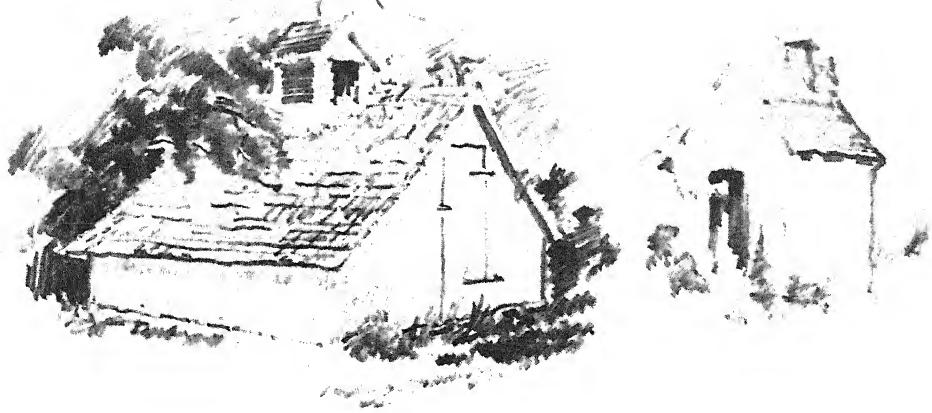
Other architects were coming forward in these later days. There were foreign-born men such as Latrobe and the Germans in Charleston; and there were numerous amateur architects, like Dr. Thornton and Jefferson of Virginia. But Bulfinch, McIntyre, and Benjamin, in the North, are to be credited with consolidating the colonial tradition at its highest point of development.

CHAPTER XXI

ODDS AND ENDS OF LIVING

IMAGINE Mr. Obidiah Hezekiah Winthrop, had such a relative of the first governor ever lived, coming along today to inspect the work of our hands! What would he have to say? "Heck!"—probably, if he had been here long enough to have picked up the word. Imagine his standing by while the whole house is suddenly illuminated by the pressing of a button! Imagine his trying to find the water supply by following the pipe back from the faucet in the kitchen sink! Imagine his trying to figure out the chromium fixtures in the ultramodern bathroom colored to reflect Mrs. Smith's personality. Imagine his looking for the first time into her electric refrigerator, while listening to Mr. Smith's brag about the number of ice cubes! Imagine his looking blandly into the empty fireplace of a cold winter; try and imagine his expression when he was told that the temperature of 85 degrees from which he was suffering came from the hum which he could hear (almost without listening) in the basement! Imagine all the other novelties that his nose and eyes and ears would encounter in a tour of a modern house. Wouldn't he say, "Things have changed since Grandmamma's time"? And wouldn't the color of his tone of voice be dark brown with dubiety in saying it?

But things haven't changed much. Only the odds and ends of ways of living have changed. Simply we make ourselves increasingly more comfortable. Mr. Winthrop might say that we did so to our soul's harm. But didn't he and his ancestors make themselves more comfortable, too, when they could? It's a relative matter maybe. Who is to say that he wouldn't have used ice cubes if they had come his way? All



ICE HOUSE AND SMOKE HOUSE, DELAWARE

of us, he and we and our like, play the game of life as set for our time. Most of us enjoy playing it. Our houses reveal the way we do it. The old houses and their accessories reveal the way the old fellows did it.

Which of us hasn't hunted or wished to hunt for buried treasure in some old house? You don't suppose that this wish or act is as common as it is without some background of fact, do you? The secret chamber, so common in old houses, is fact enough. What was a secret chamber for, if not to hide something in? We have safes today and concealed dumb-waiters, these and similar things are the modern substitutes. But who, except a professional tough, would want to investigate a safe? "Secret chamber" has an alluring sound. If it reveals no treasure, it is because some other fellow has been ahead of us. And the odor of the treasure persists. We can at least sniff at it and imagine things.

To be sure, the secret chamber of ancient days, itself inherited from ancestor days, was used as often as not to conceal and protect by concealing some wanted person. It may have hidden an owner from the Indians, an erring nephew from the sheriff, or, in later days, an escaping



SMOKE HOUSE, SADDLE RIVER, N. J.

Negro slave from his pursuer. It was a place for persons. It had its variations from normal too, as the Listening Room and the Whispering Room. From it we might have overheard some traitorous conference or intriguing gossip; or could have promulgated the whispers that became the ghost's talk of the place. It had various locations. Sometimes it was built within the heart of the chimney, sometimes between thickened walls or thickened floors of the house. We investigate it today from romantic or antiquarian motives, but it was very fact of a former day, a detail of the way of life of the time.

The smoke room may have been on occasion the secret chamber of a house. Especially the kind that was built in with the chimney and was, seemingly, a part of it. In some places the smoke room was a smoke house, a separate small structure, removed from the house, where the winter's meat supply was cured. As such it became one of the group of fascinating outbuildings grouped around the main house or barn.

It was before the days of commercial canning, remember, and other things besides meats had to be preserved for winter use. Fruits were preserved in jars, pickles in crocks, and the cellar or cellar-way was

HOUSES IN AMERICA

the place of repository. Vegetables were sometimes kept in specially devised bins in the cellar. More often they were stored in vegetable cellars, specially built outside the houses. In Connecticut the early settlers used these cellars for houses. They were pits, often dug into a bank, lined with stone which was carried a short distance above ground to be roofed.

Do you remember seeing irregular thin branches, shorn of twigs, nailed to the bottoms of rough beams in the summer kitchen? Here the pumpkins and apples were dried, the apples peeled and quartered and threaded on piping cord, and then draped around the ceiling poles. The pumpkins, sliced into long corkscrews, were coiled around the poles like snakes till the water was out of them. When the blizzard howled outside, the fruit and vegetables could be taken down, given back their water by soaking, and made into pies.

What would you do without water in your house? Suppose you were surrounded by Indians and couldn't get out? You'd do what the old fellows did. They didn't have town water in those days, but they had water. It was a question of having it in the house in time of need. There were various methods. One was the running brook. They built a part of the house over a brook, or else they diverted the brook to run through the house. It's a delightful thing to see and hear the brook water running through a tub in the pantry on its way to the old-fashioned flower garden! Of course in case of besieging Indians, it wasn't so good an idea. A brook that can be diverted one way can be diverted another. All a besieger had to do to deprive the family of water was to switch the brook to a new bed.

So they dug wells in the sheds and kitchens. This gave a constant protected supply of fresh water. If for any reason they didn't have a well, they could dig a cistern. A cistern was simply a waterproof hole in the cellar floor big enough to hold a large supply of water. The water



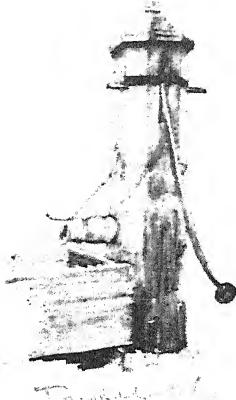
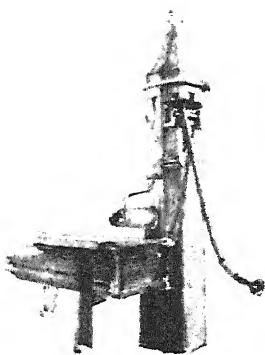
In pencil

DUTCH WELL, AFTER PHOTOGRAPH

got stale when the supply was shut off, but while it lasted it kept the people in the house from having dirty faces and from dying of thirst.

Wells often had to serve as refrigerators. It was fun for the children but rather tough on the grownups when the pails holding butter slipped down or the rope broke from which the Sunday roast was suspended. By the time the man of the house was called to the rescue, there was often a straw hat or a drinking cup to be fished for too.

Much more picturesque, comfortable, and safe was the spring house. It was built over a spring or outside the brook at some point where the water moved freely but without rushing. Here the surface could be spread out to accommodate as many flat stones just under water as the number of milk pans required. The cold water flowed around them and between, keeping the milk fresh and helping the cream to rise. The walls of the spring house were low, built of plain boards, usually white-washed inside and out—the roof high to retain plenty of cooled air.



PUMPS

The little building emerged from its setting as naturally as an ant hill. Sometimes it was half below ground, sometimes it merged with the side hill, but always it had the charm of a thing perfectly adapted to the use it served.

The well also called for and received a protective covering. At its simplest, there was a platform with a covered hole in the middle of it, and a bucket and rope or chain beside the hole. But the hauling of water hand over hand was a back-breaking exercise indulged in as a matter of stern duty only after the early days of the well. So the well-sweep was added to the water supply—the bucket was hung from a long pole balanced like a seesaw on a strut midway between the butt and the tip, dipping the water with little muscular help. Later the well was curbed or completely housed and the water bucket drawn up by a windlass placed waist high above the platform. Besides these there was the pump.

Everyone has heard of the town pump, but pumps, however important to the town, were equally important to the house, and most good houses had them. Sometimes they were over wells outside the house, sometimes over wells dug within the confines of the walls. Study pumps



SPRING HOUSE

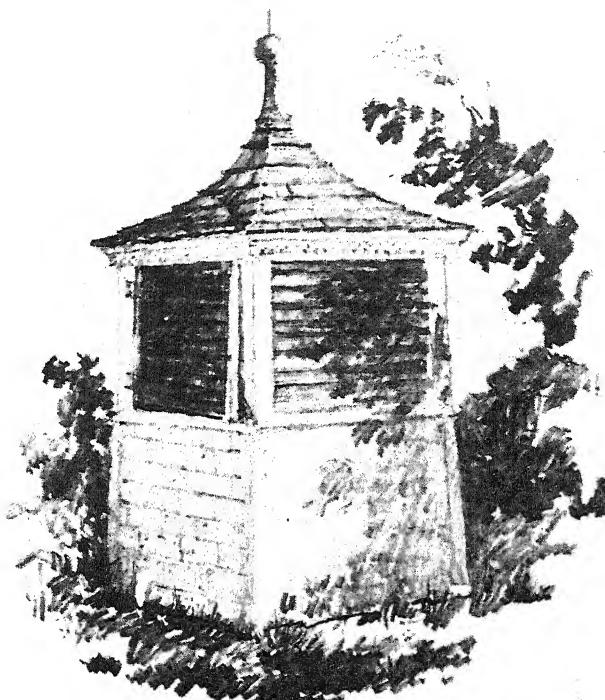
BULKHEAD



SPRING HOUSE AND SMOKE HOUSE, DELAWARE

HOUSES IN AMERICA

for variety of individual expression. "Pump," the idea, was traditional, but "pump" as pertaining to a house was highly individualized. Pumps may almost be called the sign and symbol of the marriage of tradition and individuality. The person varied his pump to suit his taste and needs, but it remained a pump, however varied.



WELL-HEAD, EAST GREENWICH, R. I.

CHAPTER XXII

BITS AND SCRAPS

HOW many people today know what upping blocks are? Yet they define themselves by their name: they are blocks you get up on to help you get up to something else, a horse, for instance. When women wore skirts, egregiously long enough to conceal their legs and ankles, and rode sidesaddle, they needed help in mounting. Upping blocks furnished the help. Maybe they let the men use them, too.

It is characteristic of most of the helps to living devised by the early settlers that they describe themselves by their names: what each does and how it does it. When a custom has passed entirely from our knowledge, the very simplicity and directness of the name of the thing that served it tends to confuse us. We suspect there is a catch in it somewhere. Yet many customs persist into the present, if only as a vestige or in books of romance. We know the name and imagine we know the fact it stands for. We even practice some of the old customs. It is largely gesturing, shadow dancing.

Who makes a date at the turnstile nowadays? We have turnstiles here and there, but, except in subways, we'd have to hunt for them, wouldn't we? Formerly the turnstile was of the currency of the day's routine, like the town pump. It did a necessary job. Lovers merely took advantage of it of an evening, and, in so doing, gave it an aura. All turnstiles have auras. Probably it is because each pair of lovers had a favorite turnstile. There were enough of them to go round. If the custom persisted today, what with the few there are, every turnstile would be crowded.

Captains' decks atop the house, a merely decorative feature for us, were a necessity, or thought to be, of the time that created them. A cap-



UPPING BLOCK

tain looking for his vessel to come in, or his wife looking for him, had to reach as far into the sky as possible for a distant view of the sea. So every captain's house became the hill he climbed, his telescope in hand.

Cupolas were a kind of captain's cabin from which he emerged to his deck. Once currently in vogue, they had other uses, too: belfries and the like. The ceiling of the belfry in the old Ship Church in Hingham, Massachusetts, has a compass painted on it. Probably everyone in those days knew north from south, but it was pleasant then as now to have an opinion confirmed, and Hinghamites had only to glance up in passing to have this satisfaction.

Weather was made much of in those days; it was intimately related to life. Weather vanes were the result. We have them today, but who looks at them, unless as an interesting piece of wrought iron or copper atop the ventilator of a barn? The sun was important, too, and the moon in its phases, presaging this and that. Sundials were in common use and were really used. Clocks and watches were expensive luxuries, not to be



CATTLE RUN AND COVERED BRIDGE

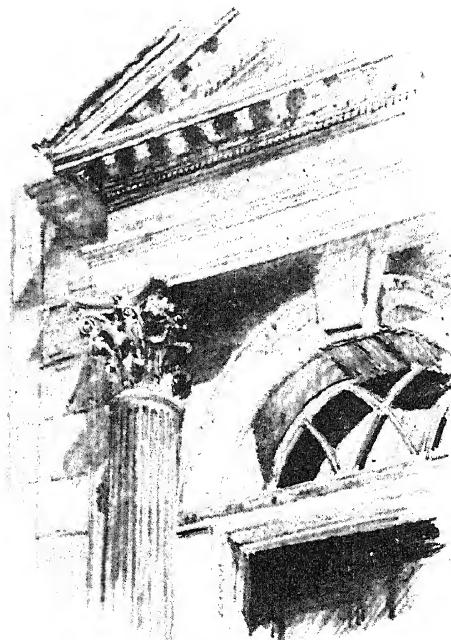
cheaply had, but everyone could have his own sundial, whether home-made and simple or imported and elaborate. Sundials outside—but inside the house, the jamb of the window frame answered the purpose well by casting its shadow across the sill on the notches that marked the time there.

Other accessory helps to living there were which speak clearly of the customs of the time. Just as the covered bridge, the cattle run, and the village green were marks of the community life, so the secret staircase, the secret sliding panels, the Dutch door (that let the sun and air in through the open upper half while the lower kept stray animals out), the dovecote and little bird houses, hedges and innumerable fences (picket, board, rail) are records of the odds and ends of the life of a single family.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

You hear of piazzas and porches as modern improvements, but people always enjoyed the out of doors in their leisure and provided the means of doing it. Piazzas were always common necessities in the South, the Dutch built porches on their houses in New Netherland, and the early houses in Philadelphia had balconies, they say. Maybe they were uncommon as parts of the house in the North, before the columned porch of the so-called Greek revival. However, they had the equivalent of piazzas in the North in the playhouses and summerhouses and grape arbors everywhere in use.

Odds and ends of living, yet they give glamor to the past and romance to the present. After all, are the big things more important?



DETAIL FROM LATER HOUSE

CHAPTER XXIII

ATTICS

MANY of us live in apartments and, living there, miss many things that made for a full life in earlier days. Not least among these is an attic. No life is complete without an attic to rummage in. The public treasury which pays for parks and playgrounds ought to stretch itself to attics. Why not an attic for every playground? We couldn't build one that would be really good, but we could "borrow" an old one and set it up on posts and reach it by way of ladders. We are constantly stealing things from the old houses and the museums have wings devoted to such-like stolen goods. For a thing is stolen, whether paid for or not, when it is removed from its proper place. There are a lot of things you can't own by buying them. But if we must steal, why not include attics with the paneling, the mantels, the ceilings, doors, and windows of the ancient houses? Attics with their rich accumulations would be creative in the park life of any city. Swings and dumb-bells and trapezes for the muscles, attics for the soul!

Superseded utensils are the oldest inhabitants of attics, these and ornaments that have become outmoded. You can furnish your old fireplace out of any of our yet unrobbed best attics. If you know the implements when you see them! But will you? A man visited our attic where he found among other things a fine old warming pan. He mistook it for a long-handled frying pan, but he was at a loss to account for the hinged cover. We told him it was to prevent the fish from jumping into the fire, and, having heard the adage, he believed us.

Consider the increment added to his education when he learned that ancient houses were cold and that ancient sheets of a winter's night

were colder and that the warming pan prevented pneumonia and sudden death. He learned at the same time and from the same attic that sand boxes were in use before blotting paper came in. Candlesticks he recognized, having some, like everyone else, in his parlor, and he deduced the use of lanterns from the specimens at hand, but not their wide variety of purpose. Whale-oil lamps were new to him, but he recognized the spinning wheel since there is at least one in the shop of every antique dealer, and he had a sentimental attachment to it, not from any knowledge of its former use but because he knew the modern song. He manifested an interest of curiosity in the sample rolls and fragments of old wall papers and in the old clock with wooden works and the several mirrors; but his appreciation was only skin deep, lacking as he was in the solid background which an education in old attics gives.

Other things besides utensils and ornaments find their way into old attics. Iron firebacks, for instance. These were imported from England to begin with but were later cast in this country. They were and still are used as decorative motives. As such they tell a story, portray symbolic pictures, present, in solid iron, coats of arms, national symbols (like the eagle), and heraldic devices. Of course these served a practical purpose, too; they were put into the backs of fireplaces to prevent the burning out of the bricks. The wealthy had them built to fit particular fireplaces with escutcheons and what not pertaining only to themselves, but the famous one of Adam and Eve and the snake might be claimed by any of us.

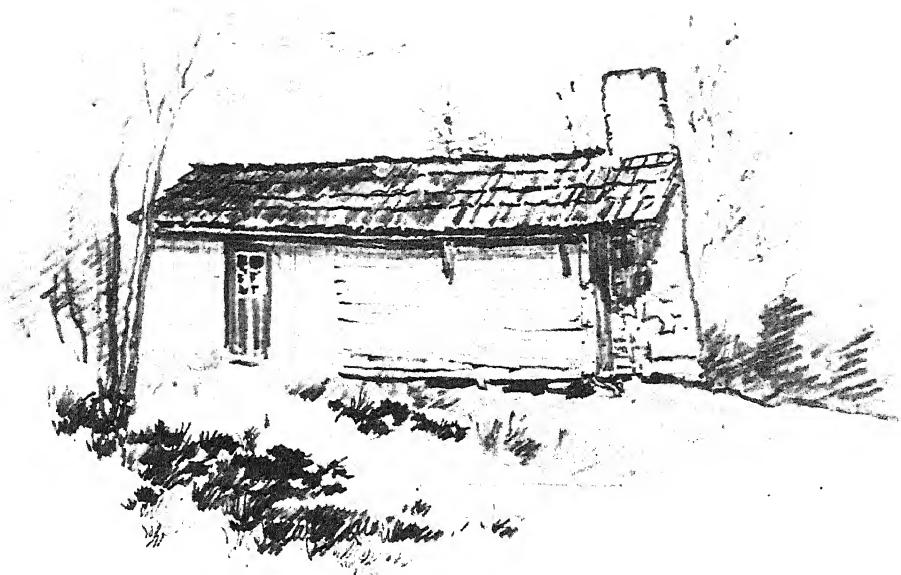
Cupboards are a frequent possession of old attics, kitchen cupboards and corner cupboards. Fortunately those most fascinating of cupboards—cubbyholes—built into the walls, especially around fireplaces, are pretty likely to be left where they grew. Of course they can't be used anywhere else. Window sidelights and lunettes, some of great interest, find their way up the ancient stairs. Doors may be found leaning

A T T I C S

against the wall, forgotten, collecting dust, their expectation of renewed usefulness forgotten; or doors preserved for their unusual type, or for sentiment's sake. You'll find witch doors, with crosses in their lower panels, in the attics of Salem and the Connecticut Valley. There is an Indian door in the attic of *The House of Seven Gables*.

We have closets now, but in the old days the closets were chests or clothespresses, and you will often find them filled with garments of their own time in many old attics. They vary in size and type and from pine plainness to oak elegance. Sometimes they contain other things than old-fashioned clothes: old hardware lost or in hiding, old silver in sets, cake baskets, or knockers driven above stairs by pull bell or the electric bell; fine old jewelry, beautiful and neglected Dutch tiles, farmers' trinkets (like cowbells, hames, and harnesses), sea captains' collections from foreign shores, books, legal documents, old magazines, Bibles, autograph albums, and so forth.

Attics are repositories for and archives of past ways of living in objective terms. The little ways, mostly. For the romantically minded, an attic is a place to dig for buried treasure, especially on a stormy day when the raindrops are pattering on the roof.



DANIEL BOONE'S CABIN, HIGH BRIDGE, KY.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE LOG CABIN TRADITION

WHEN you go into the woods to build a camp, you build a camp of logs if you can. Meaning, if you have the time, the skill, and the ax. Why?

You might dig a cave or find one in the hillside. You might throw up a brush tepee, like the Indian wikiups. You might carry a tent with you and set it up in some attractive spot. But you wouldn't by preference do any of these things. You are not by instinct a cave dweller, or an Indian, or a department-store sportsman.

The log cabin, whether you realize it or not, is your ideal. The log-cabin tradition is in your blood; your hands go instinctively to work



MODERN SOUTH CAROLINA LOG CABIN

on it without prompting from your head. It is associated in your mind with the glamor of adventure. It is the one kind of abode which backgrounds adventure. Building and living in it is, in itself, adventure, creates adventure (maybe only imaginary), brings it flowing to you, and protects you from the dangers of it. It is the place you go out from to shoot a tree with bow and arrows, calling the tree an Indian, and to which you run back as soon as the Indian bites the dust.

The reason is clear enough. All your ancestors, no matter how mixed, have built log cabins. They were the first great adventurers, and log cabins were their castles. For them, as for you, the logs have always been there when they went into the woods to build a camp. They used them, just as you do. It would have been a poor sort of ancestor who

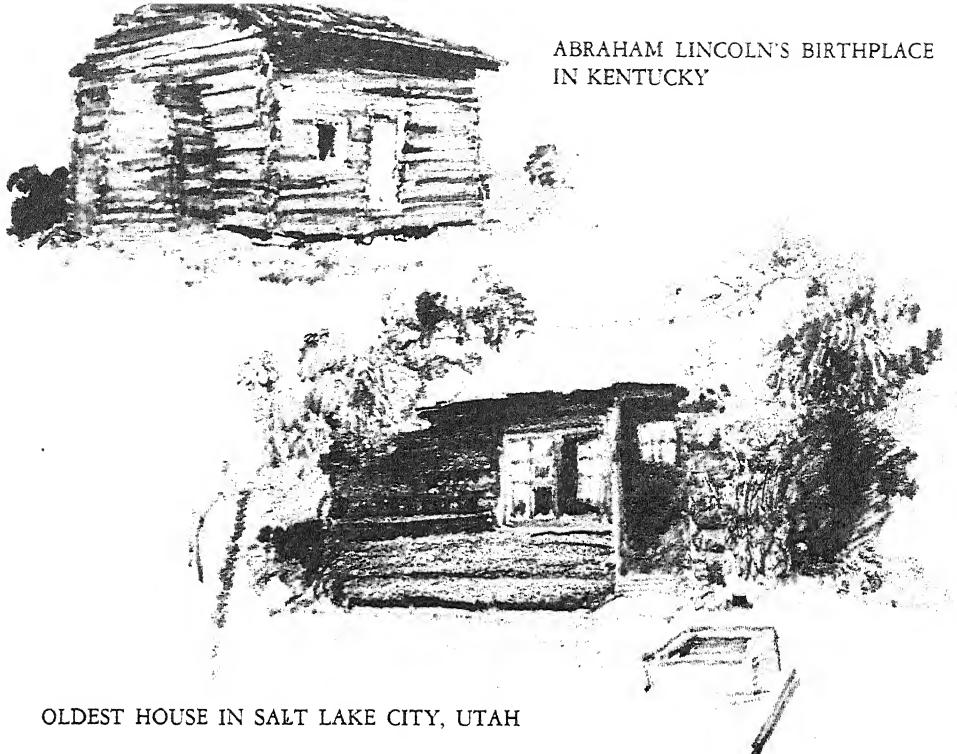


THOMAS LINCOLN'S SPLIT-LOG CABIN

didn't know enough to use the thing that was right under his nose. And it would be a poor descendant who didn't use the tradition, so perfectly adapted to his needs, that was handed down to him. Anyhow, he couldn't help but use it, if he tried.

It's not, strictly speaking, blood ancestors—your great-grandfather and his and so on back to Adam—but ancestors of the spirit that I speak of: the men and women who did the things we want to do, who set us good examples of those things and of how to do them. Our ancestors of the log cabin are all the people who built log cabins, especially the good ones. They are a mixed lot as far as nationalities go. The French built log cabins and the Dutch; the Germans, the Swiss, and the English; so did all the immigrating nations, including the Spanish, the Portuguese, the Finns, and the Swedes.

The log cabin on the Delaware set a standard. It was so well done it gave distinction to any and all log cabins. It placed the log cabin in a position not to be despised. You may find fault with some particular example, but you can't sneeze at the log-cabin idea. We don't have to apologize, even today, for our log cabin, not at least until someone has seen how well we didn't do it. The idea, by itself, commands respect, and our log cabin, if only like the poor relation of a forty-second cousin



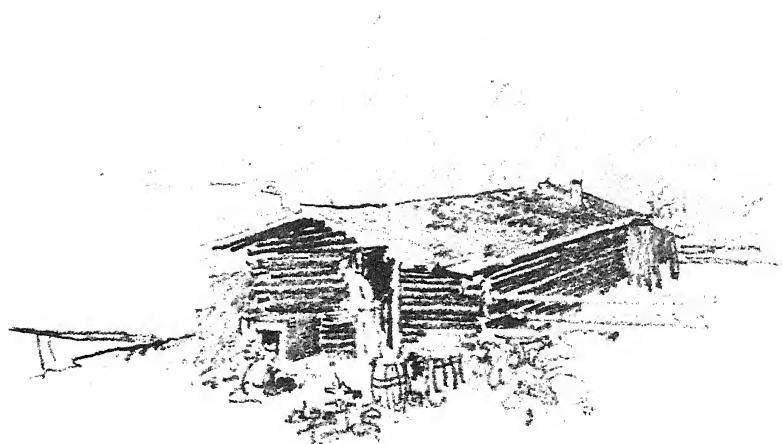
ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BIRTHPLACE
IN KENTUCKY

OLDEST HOUSE IN SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

of the king, can crawl in under the fringes of the royal robes and claim respectability of descent.

The Swedish example is seldom followed now in detail. The logs are used as they come. Sometimes they are peeled, but almost always they are used in the round. The joints between are calked with home-made mortar, held in place usually by smaller logs wedged into the joints between the bigger ones of the walls. But as a country-wide type of building the log cabin is everywhere found essentially as the Swedes began it. It is in everybody's blood. That is why when you go into the woods to build a camp, you build your camp of logs.

The log cabin is used by the individual, by the family, by the group;



AN ALASKAN LOG CABIN OF TODAY

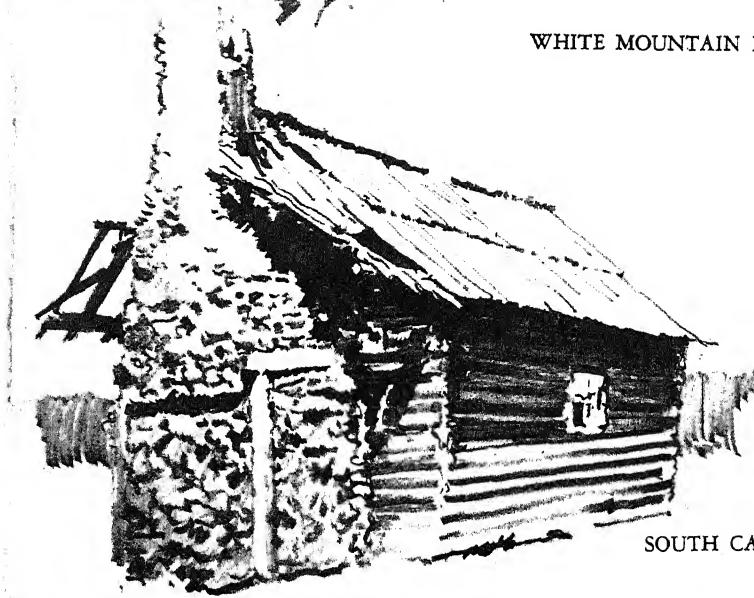
it varies in size from the one room and a roof to a settlement. The lone trapper sets out from and returns to a log cabin to run his line of traps in the frozen North, southerners on the Gulf of Mexico still occupy their shuttered cabins. The cow-puncher and shepherd guard their herds and flocks from a log cabin as a base, far away from the home ranch. A pair of wood choppers in Maine or New Hampshire build themselves a cabin for the winter's work. Lumbermen in Pennsylvania and elsewhere build a flock of cabins around an open square, a self-contained community occupied by the crew while they cut pine and hemlock.

The wealthy sportsman builds his fancy log camp in Michigan or the Northwest to vacation in. The Appalachian Mountain Club has built many log camps among those along its trails.

The frontier folk, squatting or homesteading, built a log cabin and reared a family there, and the children were sometimes famous. Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin.



WHITE MOUNTAIN HUT



SOUTH CAROLINA CABIN

CHAPTER XXV

APPROPRIATENESS

THE log cabin is a primitive abode. Nobody can deny that it is at home in the woods. It belongs there. It is not good in town or city, because there it is inappropriate. A custom is growing in the land to build log cabins in settled communities, even in cities, and to call them Bear Dens or Lapland Villas or other things of the kind, all calculated like the cabins themselves to appeal to the primitive in our blood stream, to decoy us with a sense of our own savagery, and to hint that here at last we may, for a certain price, revert to type and nature. The idea is fallacious. If we are to gratify our instinct for the primitive we must do it in appropriate surroundings.

As soon as the settlers began to build houses in groups, they came under the strong influence of the community. A house in the woods or country may be almost anything the owner wants it to be. It may be as obstreperously inappropriate as possible, because, whatever it is, it doesn't interfere with its owner's near neighbor. He hasn't any near neighbor. His neighbor isn't near enough to care much what he does, though he may privately think him a fool for doing it.

But a house built in a community has to play the game according to the rules of the place. It can't avoid being appropriate in all important particulars.

A farmer can build his house in the middle of his hay field, but let him move into town and try to build in the middle of a street and see what happens! Or let him keep his pigs under his neighbor's kitchen window or his hens free to overrun the near-by flower beds. For in the early days of a community, pigs and hens are a part of the

APPROPRIATENESS

life. Everyone has them or may have them, but their owners have to keep them out of the public-nuisance court or pay fines.

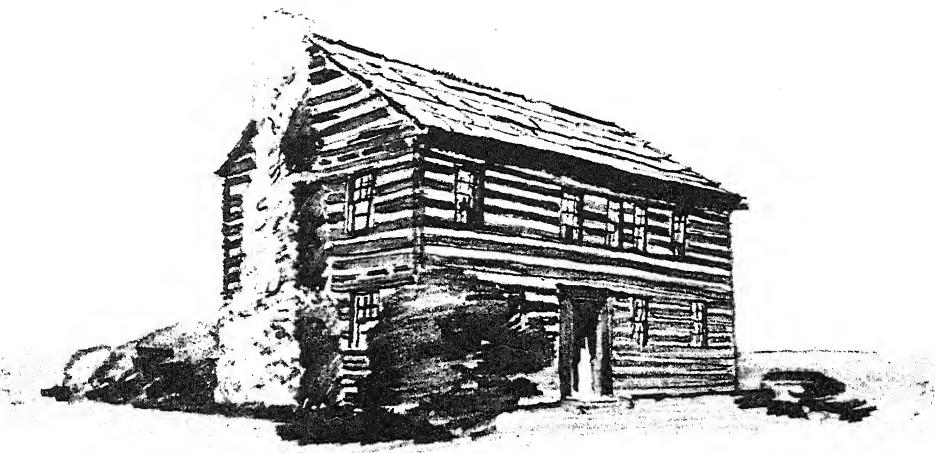
In many other ways a community protects itself. Unruly members are made to move or knuckle down. The community sees to it that the units that compose it, whether people or houses, fit in with the general plan. The general plan of a place bears the same relation to the people as a whole that the plan of a house bears to the family. It facilitates the way of living common to the group with as little interference as possible with the individuals.

This would seem to leave a man free, in the building of his house, to exercise the taste that is in him. So within the limits of the man himself, it does. He can build in any style he wants to. This is a limited freedom. A man as a rule wants to do what he can do best. Yet the thing he can do is made up almost exclusively of what his ancestors did, or of what his neighbors are doing, or, more likely, of a mixture of the two, leaving a small, a very small contribution of his very own. This minimum of originality has always been a source of irritation to house builders, but it is a fact to recognize and be content with. A house in form and content has a long tradition behind it, like the form and make-up of a human being. You can get your own flavor into your own house (indeed you can't help doing it), as you can color your thought—but you can't devise a new way of living, and a new kind of house to go with it, any more than you can devise a new way to think. It isn't being original to spoil a good plan, or a good brick wall, or a good molding just to have it different. It is much better to understand these things and then use them.

Tradition in which all good houses are rooted is a tough customer to get away from. It hangs on and is perceptible, like Proteus, under all shapes. But change it does. New conditions bring about new ways of living, requiring adaptations in the housing of them. The struggle con-

HOUSES IN AMERICA

tinually going on between the new and the old registers itself in the houses in which men live. The good is kept—or, rather, by its own superiority keeps itself, the outworn is superseded. Good tradition is wide enough and flexible enough to accommodate itself to all variations, and it is strong enough to persist in spite of them all.



OLDEST HOUSE IN DAYTON, OHIO

CHAPTER XXVI

MATERIALS

APPROPRIATENESS applies throughout in the building of a house. A good house is appropriate in setting, style, size, cost, materials. In general and in particular, appropriateness finds its background in tradition. If it is true that doing a thing in the way it has always been done is the only excuse for doing it that way, it is equally true that being different for the sake of being different is a poor way to be original. The genuine creative process is evolutionary. Results that have justified and established themselves through long experience can be wisely altered only when new conditions force the alterations.

This is as true of design as of other elements in the making of a good house. But design is a wide problem. We do not wish to attempt here a course in design. On the other hand an informal discussion of some of the principles of design may be of help without becoming academic.

The materials of which a house is built is perhaps the most obvious thing about a house. The usual materials—wood, brick, stone and stucco—are used in the walls in a traditional way and in accordance with design elements that can be stated.

Walls have value, color, scale, direction, texture. Other characteristics besides, but these are the chief. If you can separate the general character into these five parts, you can come close to knowing why you like or don't like any particular example, or why it doesn't make any impression on you at all.

Æsthetically speaking, the value of anything, including a wall surface, is how dark or how light it is, from white to black.

Color in a wall may be hard to see until you know it is there and

HOUSES IN AMERICA

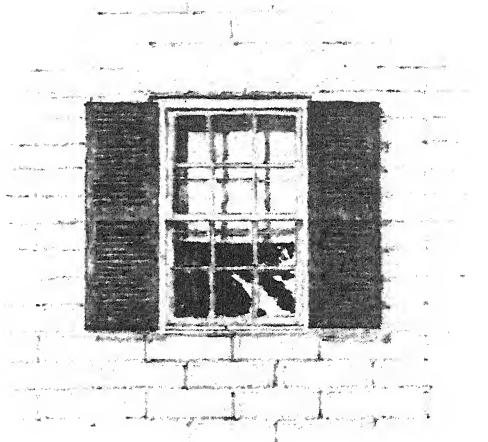
begin to look for it. It is rarely intense in hue. It may be subdued almost to the point of neutrality, yet it is there and contributes strongly to the general effect. A most striking example of color that is not obvious is to be found in what, to the casual eye, appears to be white. No white is really white. It has color in it, enough to make the surface to which it is applied seem warm or cold. Blue or green white is cold, while yellow or red make white warm. You can see this if you learn how to look.

The use of the word scale leads to a lot of trouble among the users of it. Apparently the more exactly you use it, the more strenuously someone else will object. He has a better exact use of it himself. However it is a very important item in the appreciation of houses, an intuitive awareness of them, even if you don't get to the platform stage of trying to tell about them. The word scale may be used to point out the difference in size between one thing and another, or the effect of size due to the relation of parts.

Direction is a word not commonly in use in appreciating wall surfaces, but it is a strong element in design of any kind, and no house is complete without it. Mostly it is concerned with horizontals and verticals, because these directions are most often used, but the word covers any emphatic use of angle or curve as well.

Texture in the wall of a house is another one of those obvious characteristics that is seldom seen or appreciated by the lay mind. You wouldn't miss the texture of a piece of goods on a counter; you are in the habit of looking for it. It takes real effort to make your observational habits include textures in wall surfaces. You'll find it worth your while.

These five words will dodge in and out and around in the following discussion.



WOOD BLOCKS
VERNON HOUSE, NEWPORT, R. I.

CHAPTER XXVII
WOOD

WOOD was a traditional building material in England and the colonists brought the tradition with them to this country. Both heavy timbers and finish were hand-wrought to start with. The first buildings built in Philadelphia after the cave and hut period were of heavy hand-hewn, half-timber construction, covered on the exterior with brick. But handwork was a slow and laborious process and sawmills were installed very early.

The Dutch had built sawmills on Manhattan Island by 1633. Both Dutch and Swedes had wind and water driven sawmills along the Delaware. An Englishman built one at Salem, New Jersey, in 1683.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

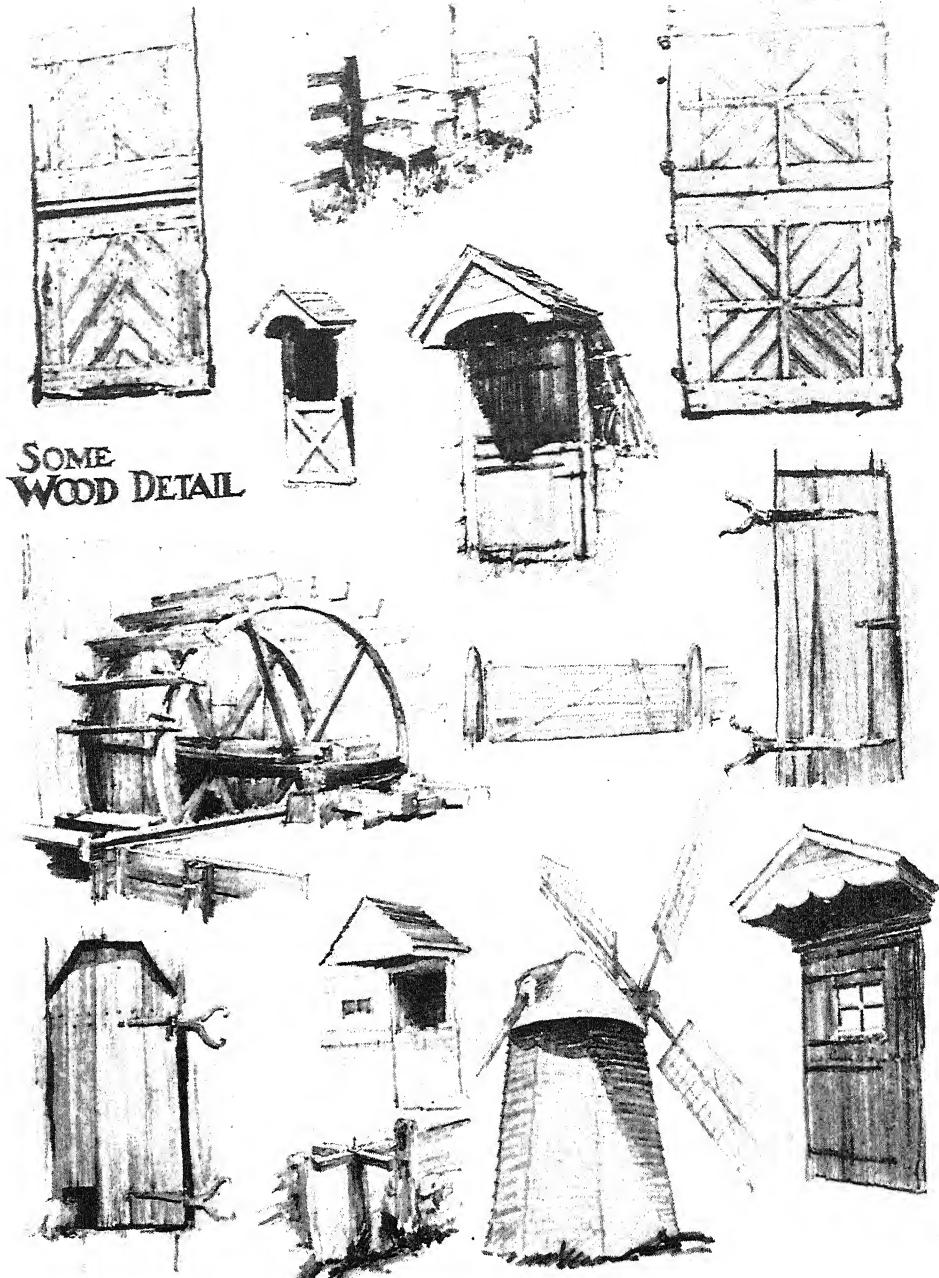
Whether hand-wrought or sawed, the early frame houses of New England are about the only ones left. The ones built at Jamestown were burned during Bacon's rebellion.

Maybe, too, wood was used widely in New England because it is so flexible. The Puritans liked to control everything they touched and wood is more easily controlled than brick or stone, its chief competitors. Pine is very flexible, indeed, and country or soft pine just asks you to make it your own by shaping it. It's the ideal wood to whittle when you're young (or old, for that matter), and building houses is young business. They used oak in New England, too, but not as frequently; pine was the favorite. In the middle states, they say walnut was used, and way down South, in Charleston, they used cypress. Cypress was a house material in New Orleans, too. Walnut and cypress are not as flexible as pine. They have color and value and grain, but they are not woods for the jackknife.

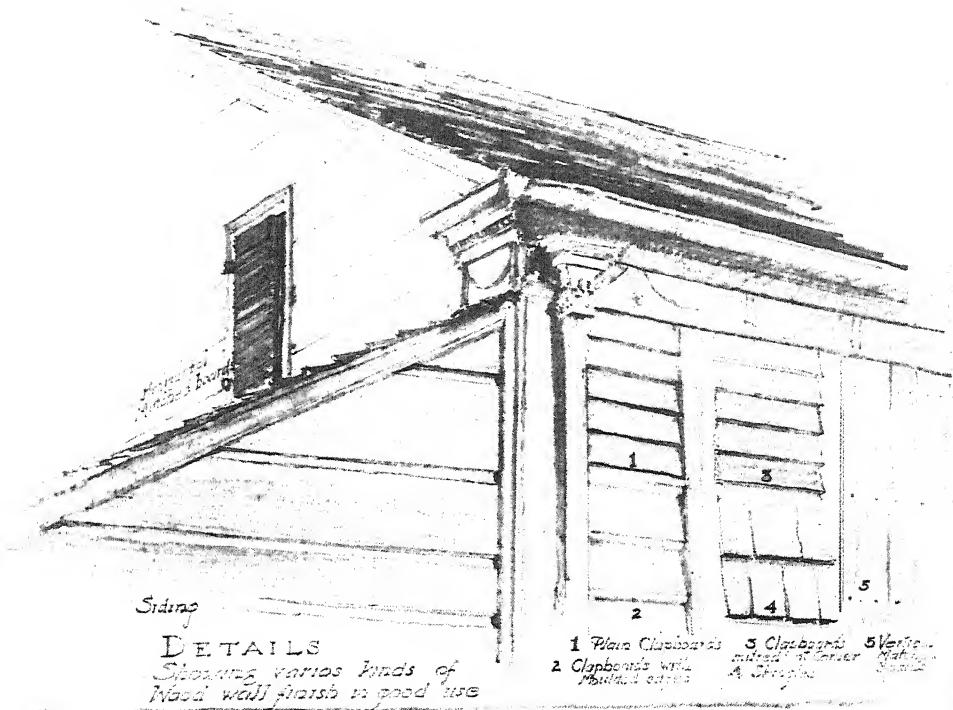
You don't describe a house very well just by saying it's built of wood. Especially if you are referring, as we are now, to the finish. So many questions crop up. What kind of wood is it? Is it wood as it comes from the saw or ax? Is it natural? Is it wood exposed in its raw state to the weather? Or is it stained? Or painted? And, whether stained or painted, what color is it and what value? Value comes first. Is it light or dark?

The charm of a house, especially a wooden house, depends greatly on its relation to the background and surroundings, and in this relation, value is of the first importance. Color, next in importance, is seen in the same way as value. Both value and color are among the first things you see about a house, and you see both, if you see them at all, from a distance. Because it is only from a distance that your eye includes the total picture of which the house is part.

Nearer, you observe how the wood is used. Everyone knows the difference between, say, shingles and clapboards, or between matched



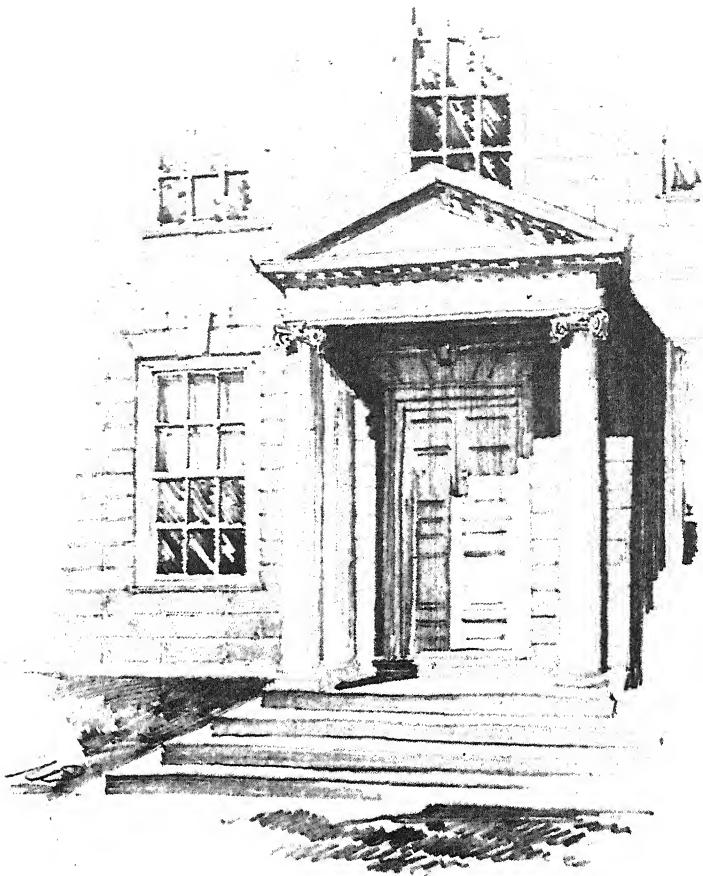
SOME
WOOD DETAIL



DETAILS — VARIOUS KINDS OF WOOD WALL FINISH

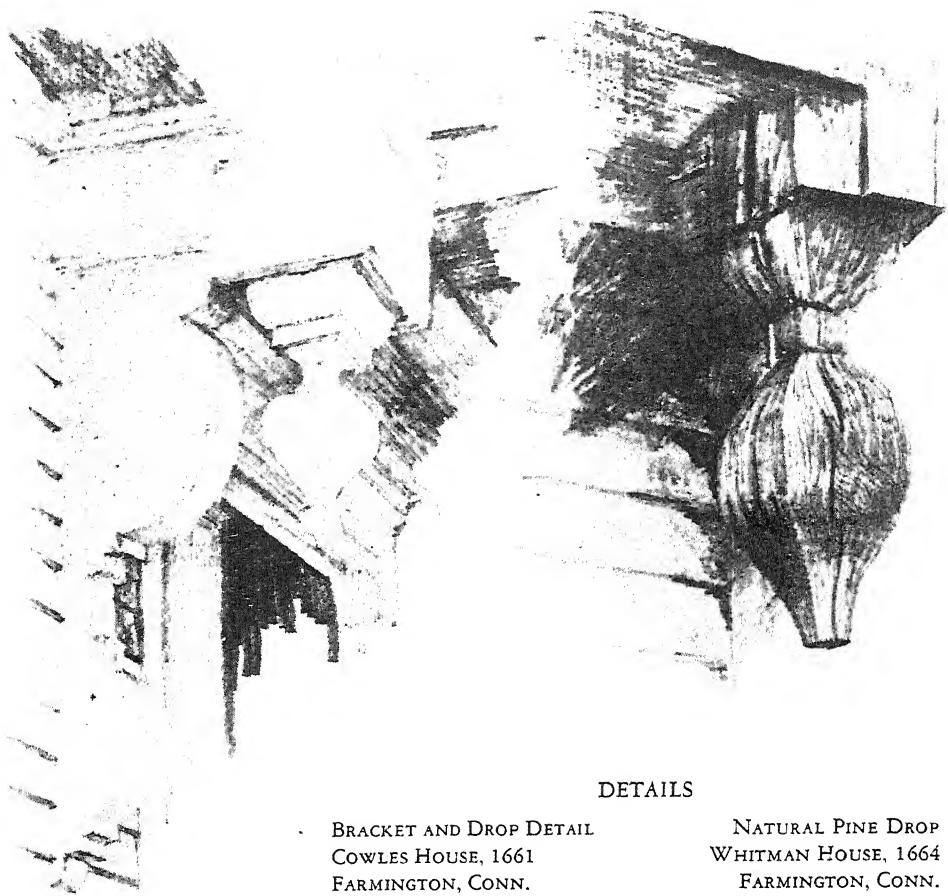
boards and siding. Very few realize that if well used, they are knowingly selected and cunningly applied. A clapboard isn't used by the expert just because it happens to be handy. Of course certain kinds of finish are appropriately used with certain kinds of houses. The two things are wedded through long association. But there is something beside years back of the association. Why were they brought together in the first place?

Clapboards make horizontal shadows along the walls of a house. The effect is the apparent lowering of the house. The long dark lines pull it down on the ground, and you can heighten the effect by increasing the number of shadows and by making each of them wider. That is, by laying the clapboards closer together and thickening the butts.



ENTRANCE OF LEE MANSION
SHOWING WOOD BLOCKS OF WALL FINISH

Nowadays, the clapboards, like other commodities, are standardized for size and there isn't the chance to play with them that there used to be. The old fellows made them, often by hand, and variety was a natural result. Sometimes they gained added interest for a wall surface by grading the spacing of them. Check up by examining some of the old gables. You'll find the clapboards widely spaced at the peak and narrowly spaced at the bottom, and graded from one spacing to the other in the

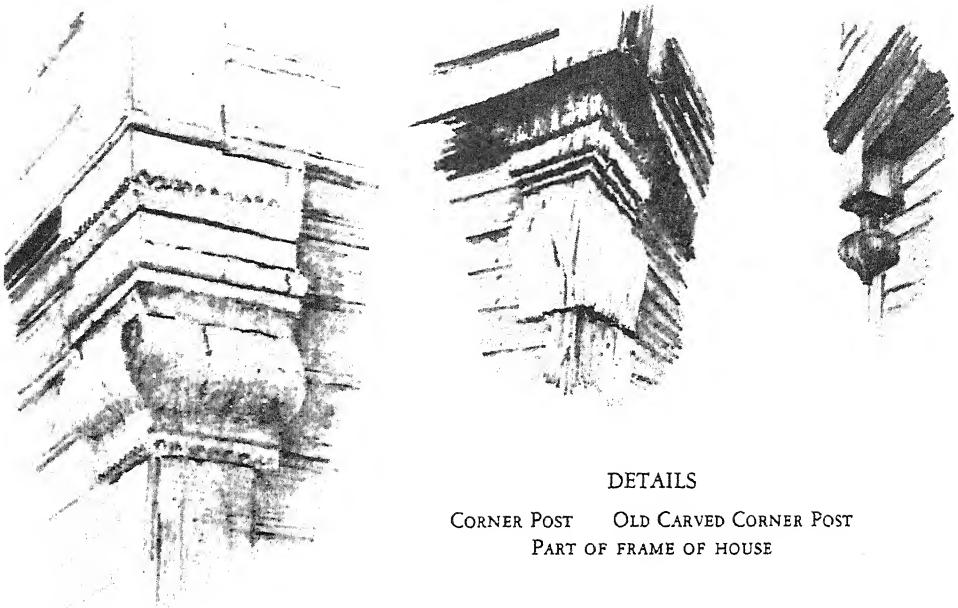


DETAILS

BRACKET AND DROP DETAIL
COWLES HOUSE, 1661
FARMINGTON, CONN.

NATURAL PINE DROP
WHITMAN HOUSE, 1664
FARMINGTON, CONN.

height of the wall. You can increase the low effect still further by mitering the clapboards at the corners so that the shadows run continuous round the house. It means a painstaking job by a good craftsman. It is easier, and usually sufficient, to put on corner boards and butt the clapboards up against them. In the old days, clapboards were considered "dressy." They were used on the front of the house, and shingles on the sides and back.



DETAILS

CORNER POST OLD CARVED CORNER POST
PART OF FRAME OF HOUSE

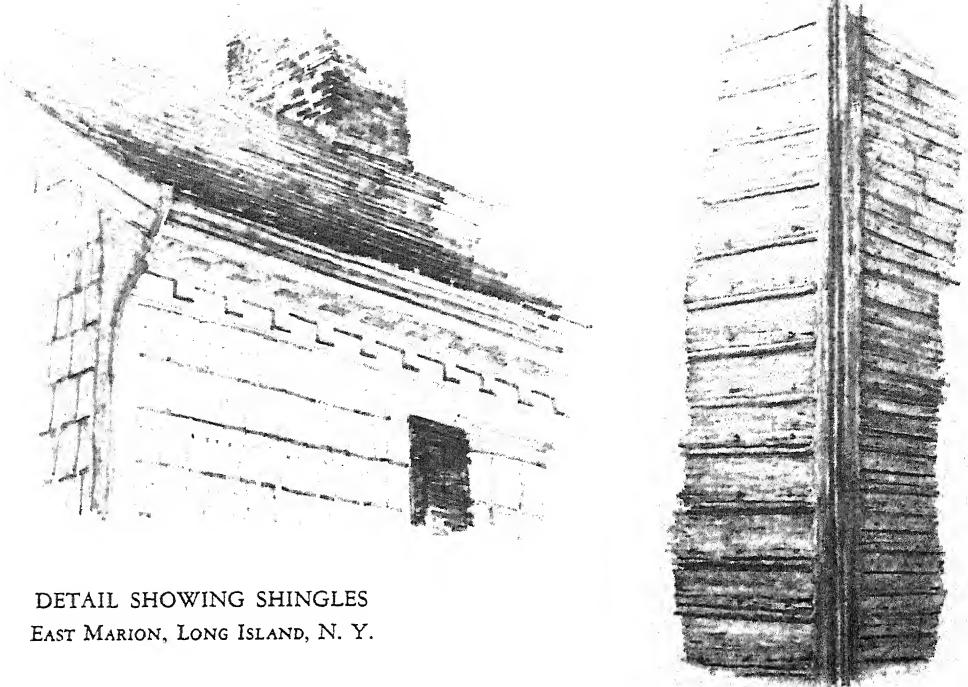
Shingles used to be handmade, too. Rived, it was called—still is, for that matter. You can buy hand-rived shingles today, usually made from cypress. You can get them of different sizes, width, and length, and with butts as thick as pudding. The handmade shingle introduces the element of interest due to texture in a wall surface. The sawed shingle is smooth and the surface monotonous, like sandpaper, but the rived shingle has a surface full of unevenness, and so, in the sunlight, full of shadows. It is often effectively used. It is not uncommon to see the small walls of a tiny cottage fretted and irritated by the misuse of it. It is well used often on large surfaces that would be barren without the interest due to texture, and on rough work of any kind. It is appropriate in the woods, on the way to or from a log cabin, for instance. You can vary the spacing of course, as with clapboards, and you can gain uniformity or the reverse by width of individual shingles. On some of



OLD WIDE CLAPBOARDING
AFTER PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIAN BUCKLEY

the old cottages, you'll find a vertical emphasis given by the use of narrow shingles with their butts laid as far apart as possible.

Matched boards are used when for any reason a plain surface is wanted. The occasions are numerous enough. The interest in a plain wall lies in its relative lack of interest. It is like the square or the circle, it subordinates itself by a purposeful monotony so that the things related to it may gain additional attention. It is like the black spot of



DETAIL SHOWING SHINGLES
EAST MARION, LONG ISLAND, N. Y.

WIDE AND NARROW CLAPBOARDS
BEADED EDGE ON WIDE; SHIP-LAPPED JOINTS ON NARROW; BUILT ABOUT 1730

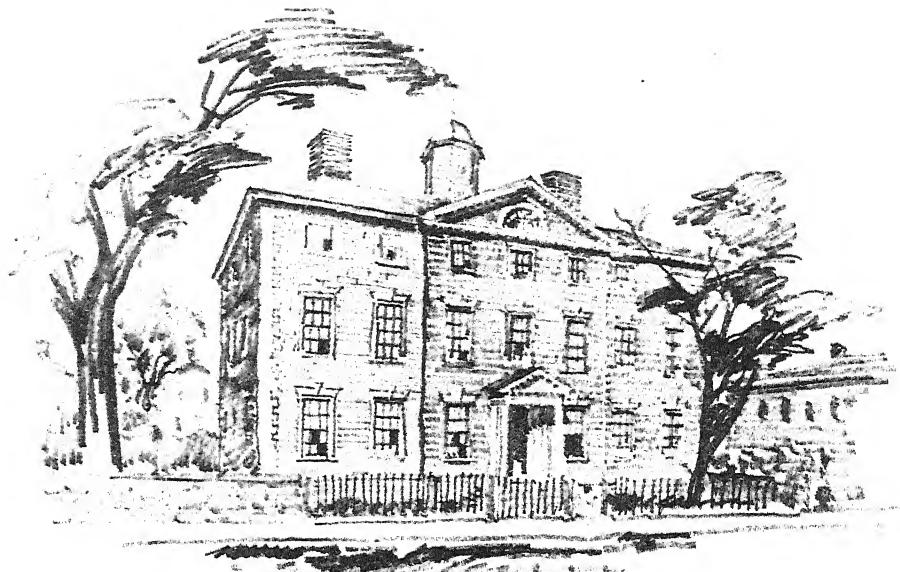
court-plaster on a lovely cheek, or the homely girl as a foil for the pretty one. Buildings of a farm group accent their modest importance by dressing in it. It is an effective background to flowers and vines. White-washed, it takes shadows of these or of near-by trees beautifully. Its best use is its complete self-suppression, while throwing into conspicuous relief the perfect proportions of wall or barn or house. It can be given texture, and it has the modest interest of joints, either vertical or horizontal, depending on which way the boards are laid. Yet in general, a plain wood wall owes its being to the need or desire of something to be set off or to have an effective background.

Siding is matched boards stretching themselves apart at the joints

to gain a shadow. Practically, the open joints give room for contraction and expansion of the boards; for which reason the stock needn't be so carefully tempered to the weather changes as the stock of matched boarding ought to be. Looked at another way, siding is clapboarding fudging a shadow instead of casting one. It has the advantage over clapboards in size. It is not like the thin clapboard, but is, in thickness, like the usual board and it comes varied in width. It can achieve the effect of wide clapboards, without curling up as they often do. It is bolder than clapboards, and has a greater natural variation in the horizontal-shadow interest.

Maybe it was siding that suggested the wooden-block effect as used in the courtyard of Royall House. Subdue the horizontal shadow and cut V-shaped notches across the boards to gain vertical shadows, lay the boards up to break joints, and you have the suggestion of a cut-stone wall. Sometimes you find the wood block used merely to heighten the interest of a wall, sometimes you find the sanded surface which simulates stone.

Wood is a facile and responsive medium if treated fairly. It responds to any kind of treatment whether of man or the weather. It takes color from mountain air or sea, reflecting either. It can add scale, direction, texture to a house, or it can be cut by a Grinling Gibbons into bunches of flowers with nodding tendrils.



LEE MANSION, MARBLEHEAD, MASS.; BUILT 1768

CHAPTER XXVIII

WOOD EXAMPLES

THE Whipple House in Ipswich, Massachusetts, built about 1650, has all the earmarks of the early houses—overhang, lean-to, high gables, dew drops, and hell-of-a-fellow chimney, squatting on the ridgepole and holding the house down. It crouches along the ground, ungainly and awry, like an ancient drunkard on the way home.

It is owned and preserved by the local society for doing such things and is filled inside with the fascinating entrails belonging to its time. Cheese press and churn, yarn wheel, and a great winnowing fan are all on exhibition in the attic. They belong with this kind of house and once worked with and for it. Huge pewter platters are in the old cup-



PAGE HOUSE, DANVERS, MASS.; PRE-REVOLUTIONARY

board. There are old lamps, candle molds, pewter porringers, trivets, trammels, tinder boxes, a tin kitchen, and lanterns (called "lanthorns"). There is a foot stove, too, iron fire backs with the date, 1693, and some cast-iron Hessians. You'll find everything there that was used in those days and maybe someone to tell you what for and how the things were used. In any case, it is a fascinating job to speculate over them and to wonder what you yourself would do with them and if you could, cast in that time, have invented better ones.

John Whipple, who owned the place, was a representative to the General Court. He was also a soldier, a captain in the war with the Indian King Philip. But another man, Minister Whitefield, a kind of occupational Saint Patrick (who drove the snakes out of Ireland), was



LEE-SMITH HOUSE, ABOUT 1792, WISCASSET, ME.

a doughtier occupant. He preached in the local meeting house and his sermons were scorchers. Too hot even for the devil who, as usual, had roosted there to counteract any good that the preacher might do. Minister Whitefield was too much for the devil, who of a certain Sunday (of record) gave up the unequal battle and fled through the window of the church. Attest, the mark of the cloven hoof on the sill.

You have to look twice at the Lee Mansion to know that it is a wood, not a stone house. The wood finish is marked off in blocks to resemble cut stone carefully laid up. It is probably the best old example of imitation stone in the country. The front wall of Mt. Vernon is marked in the same way, but no attempt is made in either case to imitate a stone

HOUSES IN AMERICA

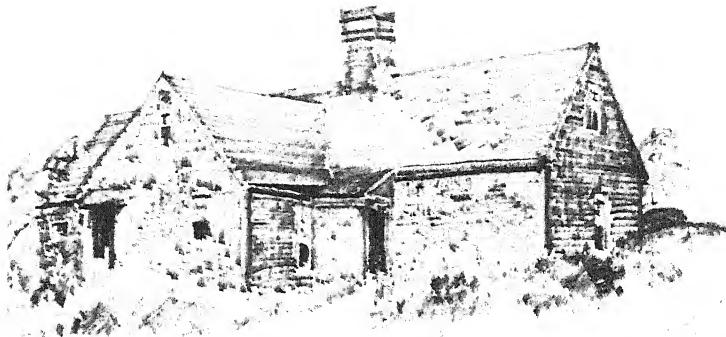
surface. There are many other old houses that have this suggestion of a stone wall, and a good many modern houses have imitated the suggestion. It is not a treatment to be recommended for ordinary houses, since it can be successful only when skilfully done, like a woman's make-up. It must suggest a stone wall without really pretending to be more than the decorative treatment applied to one. It must be honest in its duplicity, and the duplicity must be interesting in itself.

The mansion was built in 1768 and from the day Jeremiah Lee started building it, it has been the pride of Marblehead. Its very construction must have caused much excitement in the little fishing town, especially if the story is true that the timbers for its framework were brought from England.

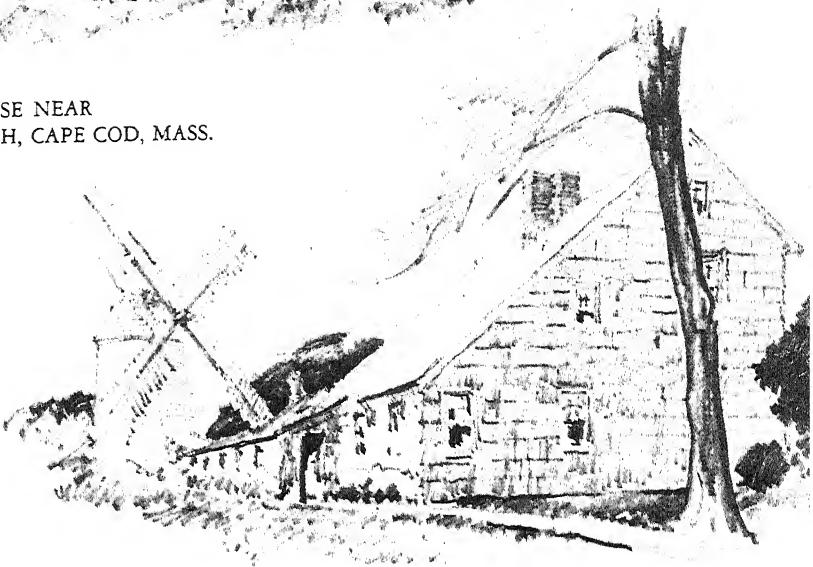
Another story about the house of interest to our commercial-minded selves says that Colonel Lee was wealthy and that he made a practice of keeping money in the house. And behind the fireplace paneling in his library are double doors of iron opening into a safe buried in the brickwork of the chimney.

The house was a place of entertainment on a grand scale. The large rooms of the house proclaim this positively, and Marbleheaders to this day tell of the hospitality and public spirit of the colonel and his wife. The cooking is said to have been done in an outside building as in mansions in the South. The coach house and slave quarters also proclaim the importance of the owner whose merchant vessels were anchored in the harbor.

Mahogany was then in use and you'll find a dado of it waist high in the great entrance hall; a dado which follows the wall opposite the elaborate staircase and above which is paneled picture paper. You'll find a "gravity hinge" on the swinging door of the family dining room, and on the large H hinges, removable brasses. You'll find fireplaces flanked by fine pilasters with carved caps, and other elaborate wood



OLD HOUSE NEAR
SANDWICH, CAPE COD, MASS.



JOHN HOWARD PAYNE HOUSE, LONG ISLAND, N. Y. (Author of "Home, Sweet Home")
LEAN-TO ROOF, WALLS SHINGLED

details. The banqueting or state dining room is paneled from floor to ceiling and was originally in natural pine. Grinling Gibbons might have carved the fruit and flowers adorning the mantel. Recessed windows, tiled fireplaces, paneled shutters, and wainscoting are used lavishly throughout the house.

In one of the second-story chambers is a double door, apparently opening into a closet. If you choose the right one, you will find a little



TYPICAL MAINE COTTAGE

staircase. This leads to a room on the third floor, supposedly the nursery. The door at the top has no latch and children couldn't open it. This was apparently the way to go quickly from the mother's room to the youngsters. Anyone who has lived in a house heated only by fireplaces, will appreciate also the advantage of escaping the icy chill of that wide stair-hall in the wee small hours of a winter's night.

This home of the Marblehead Historical Society has something lovely and interesting to show from the cellar with its zigzag-paved floor and great brick-arched store closets to its highest point above the roof. From the side entrance, where the old coaches left the family and guests, a staircase, paneled and carved, leads to the third story. Another flight leads to a landing, and from there as into the spider's parlor, one may go "up a winding stair." This ends in the cupola from whose six small windows there is a view of the town, the harbor, and the bay.

Naturally a mansion like this with such a master and mistress had

WOOD EXAMPLES

its share of famous visitors. Perhaps it may not have any furniture that came over in the *Mayflower*, but it did entertain Washington, Monroe, and Jefferson. Also, in 1824, when Congress was official host to Lafayette and his son, George Washington, the French gentlemen were entertained here.

What a marvelous party it must have been! Apparently even the banqueting hall could not hold all the guests, for we read that tables were set in the stair-hall. Candlelight, laughter, music—no wonder the elderly Lafayette joined the young people and danced a minuet in the ballroom! Probably some of our great-grandmothers whom Lafayette kissed as little girls were at that party, too!



DENNIS, CAPE COD, MASS., ABOUT 1750; TYPICAL



MORRIS HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA, PA.
CITY HOUSE



"HOMewood," MARYLAND

CHAPTER XXIX

BRICK

BRICKS were made in Virginia in 1612. A brick was made and used in early New Orleans, remarkable for the fact that its attractive appearance in a wall was due not to its good but its poor quality. The Dutch were used to bricks, made them, and imported them. Bricks were made in Newcastle in 1656. There were established brickyards in Salem and Medford (Massachusetts) well before 1680. William Penn advised England that there was plenty of work in America for brickmakers and masons. The first houses in Philadelphia (after the early shelters) were almost all built of brick. This was a protective measure in part; since the fire of London in 1666 had undoubtedly made all communities fire-conscious. Little wonder that with the industry of brick making well established at an early date the art of brick laying asserted and maintained itself almost from the beginning.

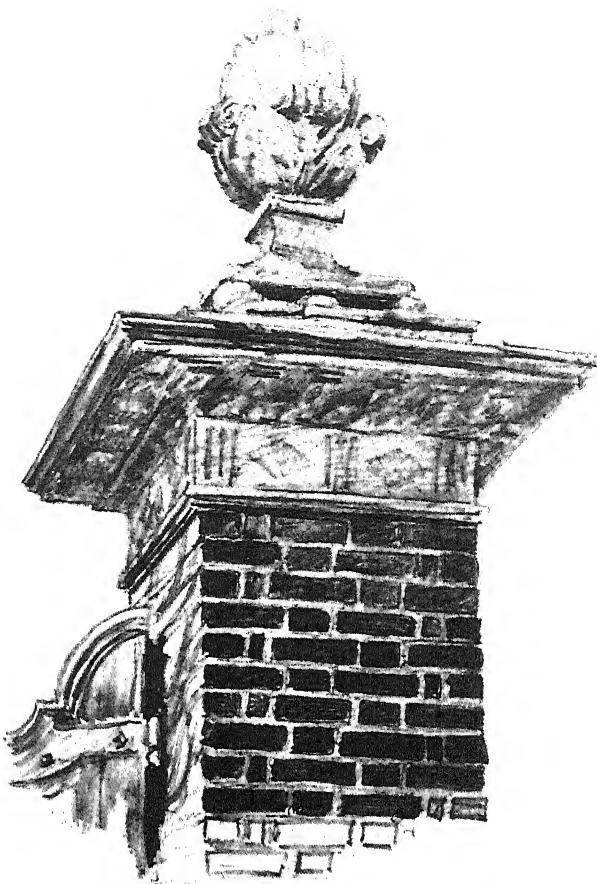
When you examine a brick wall, don't stop with the color. Color it

has aplenty; color is the outstanding characteristic, especially of a red brick wall. But color is qualified very greatly by other characteristics: for instance, the way the bricks are put together (bond) to form the wall; the kind of joint which at once holds them together and separates them one from another, and the texture of the individual bricks. Furthermore, surroundings are so intimately related to any wall, including one of brick, that any particular setting must be considered as bestowing or withholding good color character.

Nowadays we have bricks of all colors. Formerly, brick meant red. Red color emerged in baking from the constituents of the clay. But constituents varied with the clay, and the clay varied with the location. Refer to the old walls and check this, or to new ones, if they are red. You will find reds from very light to almost black. You will find reds that are blue and reds that are yellow. You will find reds that are neither yellow nor blue nor any other color but themselves—good, rich, real red. Real red is a primary color whether you mix it in your eye or on the palette.

The bonding of brickwork is primarily a structural matter. Bonding, as the word implies, is the laying up of bricks to form a wall. Of course, if bricks are cemented they will hang together, no matter how you bond them. Thomas Jefferson, wanting to save bricks, built a high and long wall only one brick thick around the grounds at his pet University of Virginia. It was a serpentine wall, a wall in segments of circles reversed against each other. These segments formed orders which were a substitute in stability for the strength of a bonded wall of two or more bricks in thickness. He used only "stretchers." That is, brick laid on bed at full length, breaking joints at every course.

The wall built two hundred years ago is still standing. Maybe there was a trick of his own to it, since later walls on his model haven't stood up as well. In any case, it's a dangerous model to follow. The ancient



FLEMISH BOND, EDWARDS-SMYTH HOUSE, CHARLESTON, S. C.
USED WITH CLOSURE

and aristocratic "Flemish bond" is probably the best method of bonding. In this, the "header" and "stretcher" alternate throughout every course, and break joints for all courses. It has the economic disadvantage of greater expense in the laying and in the cost of the bricks: you need more surface bricks, and the bricks you don't see in a wall are usually of a cheaper grade.

An easier wall to lay, and so less expensive, is the so-called English bond, in which a course of stretchers alternates with a course of headers.



DETAIL OF WING, TULIP HALL, MD.

The same number of finish bricks are required. The usual brick wall is laid mostly of stretchers, with a course of headers only once in six or eight times. Occasionally you find walls that are more or less freak walls. There are plenty of modern examples, and Annapolis is proud of her fine old mansions containing walls made up only of headers.

The bonding has much to do with the appearance. Direction comes into it strongly, and texture—but there is something else not covered by either. It is a kind of extra-curriculum interest. For instance, the wall of stretchers only, like Jefferson's wall, in spite of a strong horizontal direction, is as lacking in general interest as a brick wall can be. It is monotonous, but being monotonous, it makes a good background wall, as for vines. On the other hand, the wall of Flemish bond forms



CITY HOUSE, NEW CASTLE, DEL.

diagonal patterns while maintaining horizontal and vertical directions, and is as full of interest as straightforward bonding can make it. The English bond emphasizes the horizontal, but is haltingly vertical. There are innumerable examples of trick and freak bonding: excellent things to avoid, because only a very great expert, indeed, can handle them with success.

Bonding effects can be played up or played down by the way the

joints are made. Here, in jointing, a lot of trickery is practiced. You will find joints where the mortar is scraped off flush with the brick-work, and where there is no shadow interest at all. Others, where there isn't anything but shadows: the mortar has been dug out of the joint so far back from the surface that you can see it only with a flashlight. In between these extremes, you will find all kinds of jointing, narrow and wide, deep and shallow. The really good joint is the kind, like any other good thing, that does a good job. That is, a joint which, given the kind of brick that it holds together, keeps the weather out first and gets by-product effects afterwards. There is room enough in doing this for a sufficient variety of effects.

The mortar, its color and texture, have much to do with the attraction due to joints. Good mortar is not affected in color texture or amount used. It tends strictly to its own business. It is not above getting all the attention it legitimately can, but it stops with that. The width of the joint is the first consideration. It is wide or narrow in proportion as the brick is rough or smooth. Other things being equal, you place your bricks as close together as possible and the joint does the rest. It is fine in texture when used with a smooth brick, as you will find in Salem, Massachusetts. It is coarse in texture against a rough brick, like that of the church where Paul Revere had the lanterns hung. The striking of the joint, that is, the dispensing with the superfluous mortar which squashes out as the bricks are set in place, is best done when most simply done; usually with the trowel.

Jointing and bonding, panel or pattern are merely accessory helps or hindrances to the brick itself. Its selection from all other available bricks is the beginning of a brick wall and remains the most important factor in it. The expert makes a program of what he wants in general—as rough, smooth, dark, light, and so forth—and makes a choice from the samples submitted to him. He uses technical language to save him-



*
BRICK HOUSE PLASTERED, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MD.
ORIGINALLY BRICK—STUCCO ADDED; PART REMAINING

HOUSES IN AMERICA

self trouble in the early stages of selection. But the inexpert needn't stumble around among technical terms. He'd much better stumble around among brickyards after he has first found out what he wants by examining many good brick walls, already built. You can find what you want quite easily if you know what you are looking for, whether you know the language of masonry or not.



ENGLISH BOND — STONE QUOINS



FAMOUS BRICK HOUSE, WESTOVER, VA.

CHAPTER XXX

BRICK EXAMPLES

WESTOVER, beautifully set on the James River, near Richmond, is an outstanding example of those houses built in America which were modeled on English prototypes. Nevertheless, the house adapted itself perfectly to the ways of living in the Virginia of its time, and was the first of the long line that developed the typical Southern type of plan.

Kitchen and outbuildings are connected with the main house by colonnades. The slate roof is distinctly American. There is a secret room under one of the cellars, and two other underground rooms, one

HOUSES IN AMERICA

of which could be reached directly from a third-floor chamber. A wide hall, paneled from floor to ceiling, runs through the house. It is said that the mahogany balustrades of the stairway were brought from England.

Built originally by William Byrd the first about 1690, it was partly destroyed by fire in 1749, when it was carefully restored by his son. This second William Byrd, a brilliant example of European education and a member of the English bar as quite a young man, was our first native-Virginian writer. Architecture seems to have been among the subjects that interested him. Indeed, an appreciation of architecture seems to have been part of the cultural background of the gentlemen of his day.

Apparently the Byrd family spent much time in England, for his daughter, Evelyn, was educated there, too. When she was presented at the court of George III, she captivated all hearts by her beauty and gentle loveliness. She is said to have been "the toast of two continents."

When the family was home, the brick mansion with its walled, box-bordered garden covering two acres, its beautiful furniture, its library of four thousand volumes was of course the scene of entertainment for distinguished guests.

One of the interesting features of the estate is the old church, built about 1690. This was in accordance with a law passed in Virginia that every plantation should have a place of worship. If we could visualize those plantations and the means of transportation, this law would be easier to understand. The quickest way to travel was on horseback, and at the height of Westover's glory, the land of William Byrd the second covered two hundred and eighty-one square miles.

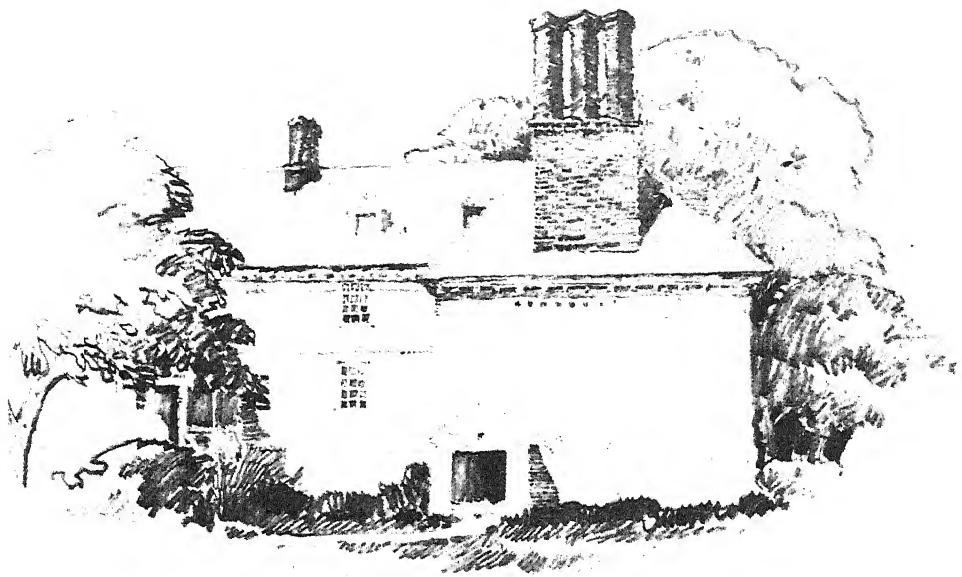
Stenton, near Philadelphia, unlike most of our old houses, has never been restored. It never had to be. It stands now as it stood in 1728 when it was built. But it was threatened with destruction and saved only by



"STENTON," 1727, PHILADELPHIA, PA.; FAMOUS BRICK HOUSE
REAR VIEW, SHOWING KITCHEN WING

the quick wit of Dinah, the Negro caretaker. During the weeks that the British held Philadelphia, order was given to burn all mansions north of the city. Seventeen were destroyed. Two dragoons arrived to burn Stenton. They told Dinah to pack her duds and leave, and then went to the barn to get straw to start the fire with. An officer looking for deserters came along opportunely and was directed by Dinah to the barn, where the innocent dragoons were seemingly concealed. He arrested them, since no enlisted man can talk back to an officer, and marched them to the guardhouse. This minor matter having been satisfactorily settled, the major matter of burning the mansion was forgotten, and Stenton escaped destruction.

Stenton was, after Westover, the finest mansion in the colonies in 1728. It was built of brick by James Logan, gentleman and scholar, to become the jewel in a setting of five hundred acres. There is a kitchen wing containing a great fireplace set at right angles with the house,



FAIRFIELD, 1692; GLOUCESTER COUNTY, VA.;
BRICK WHITEWASHED

and making an ample court surrounded by trees and shrubs. Covered porches on house and wing take the place of our hallway from dining room to kitchen. The main hall was paved with brick, so that Mr. Logan could in bad weather ride directly into the house and dismount under cover. Besides this and the large library on the second floor, there were the usual conveniences of the time: a listening room and secret stairways connected with the barn and the family graveyard.

There were also the usual distinguished guests. Washington stopped here just before Brandywine and General Howe at the time of the battle of Germantown. Indians were frequent guests, camping on the estate, three or four hundred strong. One of them, a chief, proposed exchange of names after the Indian fashion. James Logan said, "You may have my name and I'll give yours to the creek that flows across the estate." So the Wingohocking was named.

CHAPTER XXXI

STONE

STONE, unlike brick, can hardly be called a manufactured product. Unlike brick, too, it was used within a limited distance of its source, the quarry. The distance increases now with the demand though stone is not exactly a mobile product. Nowadays, of course, with the greater facility of transportation, it is carried long distances, and stones that have achieved reputations for special uses are now exported and imported. But it would hardly have occurred to the colonists as a possibility to buy Carrara marble or travertine from abroad or limestone from Indiana or even the now currently used marble from Vermont.

They did however find quarries in the vicinities of some of their own settlements. The Dutch used stone in their colonies. The Pennsylvania trap rock was early in local demand. Massachusetts had its granite.

By and large the stone business began early in the new world and increased as time ran along, employing the men of the quarry, the stonecutter, and the masons.

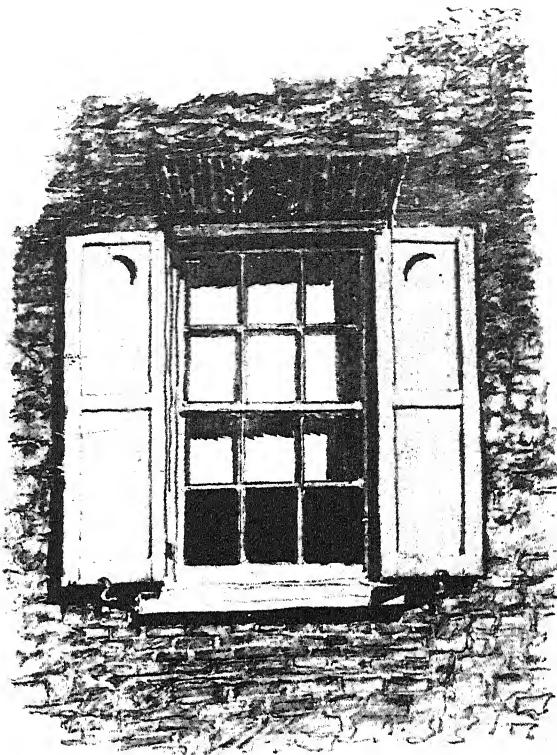
Stone when well laid is laid "on bed." That is, every stone is placed in its most stable position. If it were placed to stand alone, it would be where it was hardest to dislodge. Every stone "breaks joints" with the stone above it and the stone below it. In other words, every good stone wall like every good brick wall is well bonded. A stone mason will tell you that a wall is good when it will stay put without the help of cement. Sometimes, accepting the challenge of wind and weather, masons will build walls without cement, just to show what good craftsmen can do. They used to do it quite often for barn foundations, but not often for an outer wall, whether of barn or house. No uncemented



DETAIL OF STONE WORK — WINDOW OF BARTRAM HOUSE

joint is so tight that the rain, especially when blown by the wind, won't find a way through it.

All of which sounds like the practical side of wall making. It is, but, also, it has a lot to do with the æsthetic side. For if there is one true thing about a wall it is that if it doesn't do a good job, it isn't much to look at. A wall may have color and texture, but if it doesn't build to the eye and give you a sense of stability, then the eye condemns it and the æsthetic sense remains unsatisfied.



WINDOW DETAIL, VAN CORTLANDT HOUSE—SHOWING STONE WORK OF WALL

Of course, bonding, like other things, isn't as simple as it sounds. The principle remains intact throughout all applications, but how you apply it in any particular instance, depends on the stone you have to work with. A cut stone carefully shaped into a bondable unit is one thing, a field stone or a boulder is another.

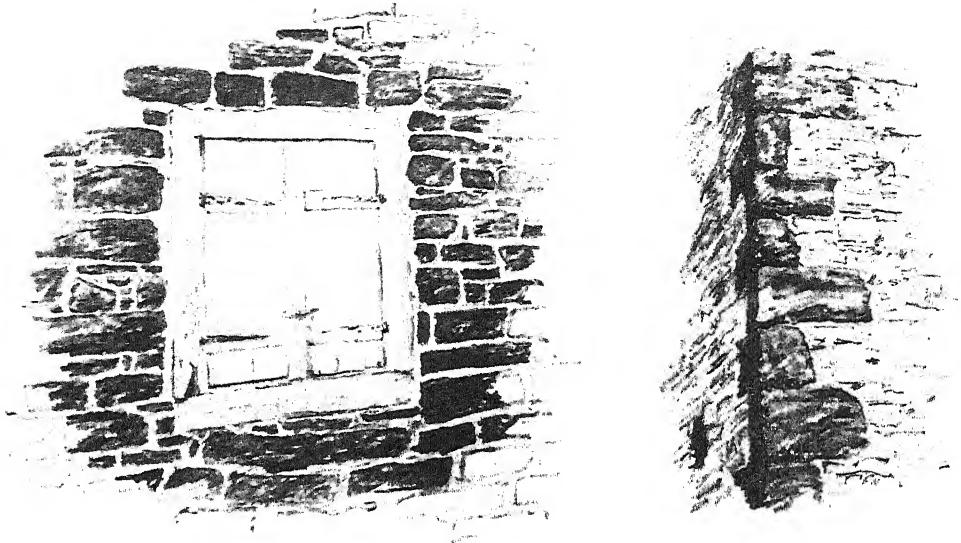
A field stone doesn't make a real stone wall, anyhow. It is too much like a baseball in which one side is as good as another—and none of them good, given wall requirements. The Germans set examples of the best use of field-stone walls when they built their big barns of them in Pennsylvania. But their walls were really only a kind of cement wall filled with stones, and meant to be plastered, at least on the outside.

The effect is pleasing, because you don't know you are looking at a stone wall, and so don't require it to look like one. Plaster predominantly strikes the eye with the round surfaces of the stones looking through here and there, where the thin coat, as of whitewash, has crumbled away.

They have another and a better kind of stone wall in Pennsylvania, and you will find plenty of good examples of these, ancient and modern. Of course you will find examples elsewhere too. It is a ledge stone, called "trap rock." Solid and hard in body, much like slate, it is taken from the quarry in relatively thin layers, and broken into pieces of any desirable size or shape, the way you break up peanut brittle. It is of beautiful and varied color, mostly of a dark value, and builds into a fine wall. The geologists probably have a private name for it, but to the builder it is simply the example *de luxe* of ledge stone.

Joints, and the mortar that marks them, are even more important in a stone wall than in a brick one. Because as a rule they are wider and contribute more definitely to the general effect. Of course the dry wall, the kind laid without mortar, has joints marked by shadows only. There is no contrasting value due to mortar to pick the joints out clearly and throw them at you. But even shadows can trace a pattern on a wall, and pattern is the thing that counts in jointing.

It is easy to do very funny things with the design traced by the joints of stone work, and if you examine walls carefully, you'll find many that portray birds and beasts or inanimate objects of one kind or another. Of course it all depends on where you stand when looking, and on how strongly the joints are contrasted with the stone. A distant view gives you a greater possible variety of patterns and designs and natural pictures than a near one. However, near or distant, outstanding separate objects in a wall proclaim the wall as bad in bond or joints or both. A good wall is to be seen for itself alone, and not for pictures.



SOME STONE WORK FROM PENNSYLVANIA

on its surface. You'll look at a bear if a bear is present, before you look at the wall, and though this may be a reflection on the looker, it is also a reflection on the wall. "Look at my picture," said the painter to his friend, "not at the frame."—"I can't see the picture for the frame," the friend replied.

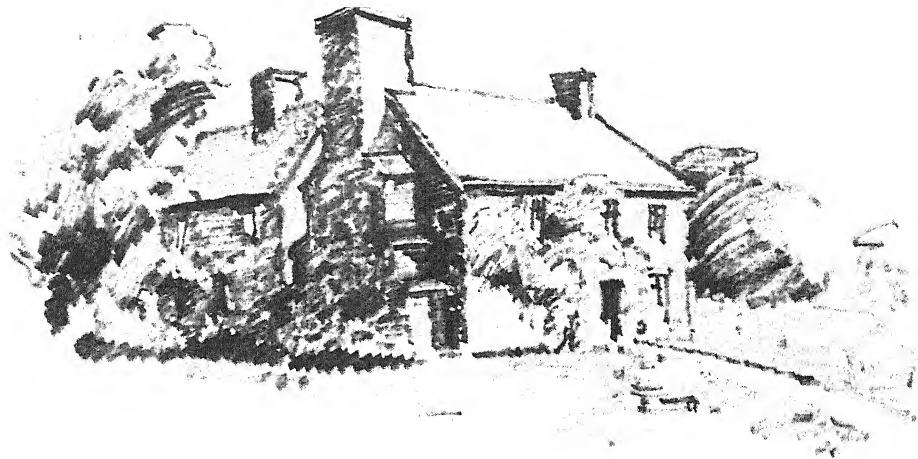
It is not so hard to see that a wall is bad as it is to do a good one. How to do a good one is the important question. The how is learned, as usual (if at all), by a study of many good ones. The good points stick in your mind and become a part of your requirements, consciously or unconsciously, when you build your own wall. You will discover that a good wall results when the stone is properly laid up. The joints accent the good laying, but don't impair it. Stability is the first consideration, and after that compactness. If the wall will stand without joints against the wear and tear of time, and if the joints are as uni-

HOUSES IN AMERICA

form in width as the kind of stone permits, then the wall is well bonded and will reveal very few disconcerting pictures on its surface.

Scale in a stone wall is very much a question of joints and mortar. The sizes of the stone used are revealed most clearly by mortar in strongest contrast in color and value, both, with the stone itself; and the relative sizes of the stones give scale to the wall. There is interest due to scale, too. The small stones make the big ones look bigger and the mixture of small and large make a more interesting effect. And, since the irregular outline of ledge stones makes tight or narrow joints impossible, it is clear that the mortar of the wider joints becomes an important element in the effect. Cut stone closely fitted has jointing of slight effect and that effect is due to direction chiefly. The effort is usually to play the stone up for texture, color, and value, with an underemphasis on scale. The color and value of the mortar are therefore of great importance. These are the same as those of the wall as nearly as may be, when the wall is for background only or when you want to subdue it for any other reason; and in widest contrast when you want to make the most of it as a wall.

Stone, like brick or wood, is best used when its structural integrity is preserved. The result gives ample opportunity for a study of value, color, scale, direction, and texture, the leading characteristics of all good walls.



WHITEFIELD HOUSE, GUILFORD, CONN.

CHAPTER XXXII
STONE EXAMPLES

EVERYONE knows the size of his signature on the Declaration of Independence, but not everyone knows what John Hancock said when he wrote it: "There, John Bull can read that without spectacles. Now let him double his reward." He had already been proscribed for a year on account of his Revolutionary activities.

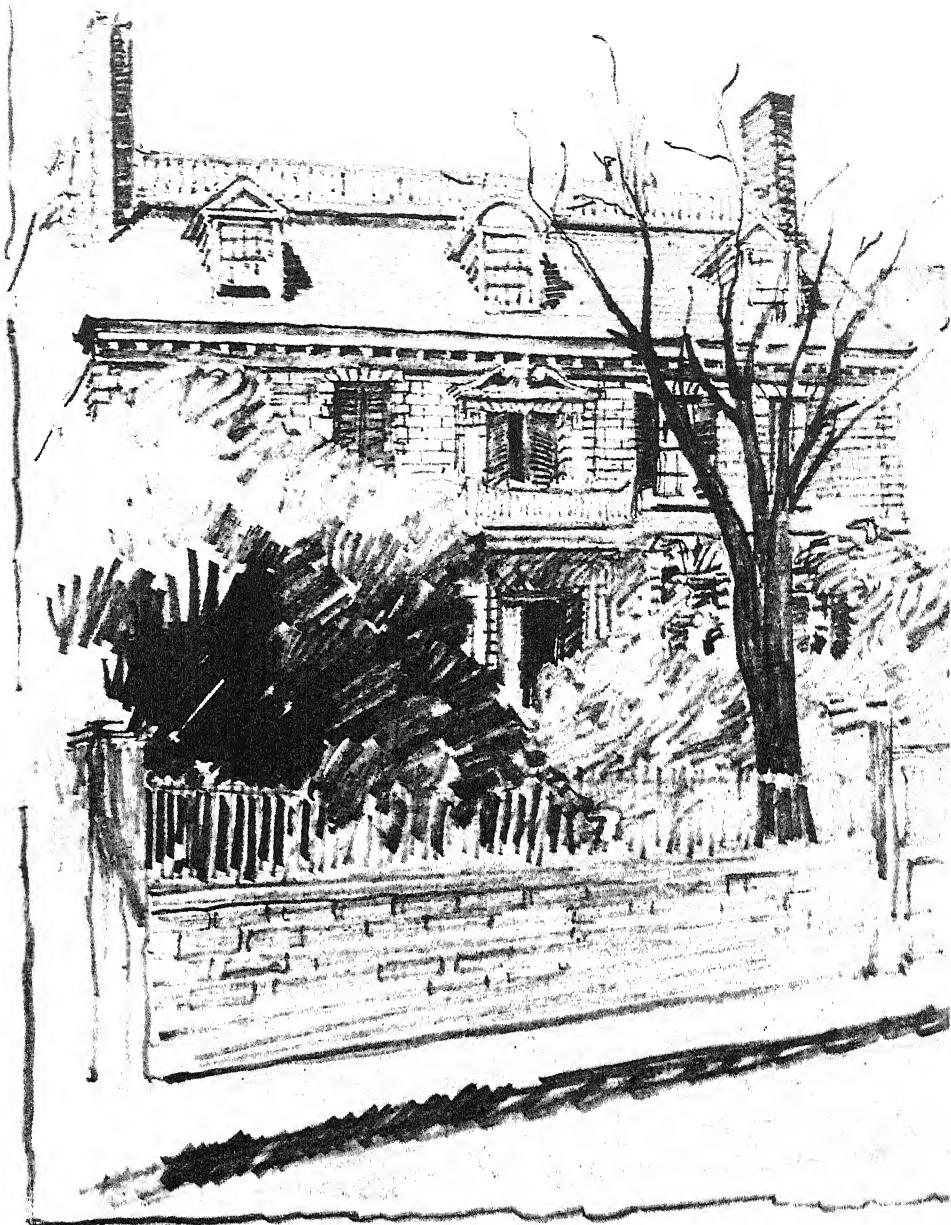
John Hancock may always have written his name large for he valued himself highly. His position, wealth, lavish hospitality, and the fine mansion that housed these were a conspicuous appraisal of his self-importance. His public offices were endorsements. He was President of the Provincial Congress of 1774, of the Continental Congress of 1775-7, and of the Convention that adopted the Federal Constitution. He was not only the first signer of the Declaration, but the first governor of Massachusetts, and he was given a second term.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

He lived in state, traveled in a coach drawn by six horses, escorted by fifty horsemen, and attended by servants in livery. He wore with an air clothes of costly materials. A coat of crimson velvet is preserved in the old State House, together with a waistcoat of blue silk, embroidered in gold. He was a great merchant, gaining the public honors usually given to professional men, but his clothes and his ideas of personal consequence made him more enemies than his achievements. There was another side: a portrait by Copley in the Boston Art Museum pictures him as a man of friendly appearance, simply dressed.

Hancock was the one conspicuous aristocrat of Boston who sided against the king and stood his ground when all the others fled to Halifax. In signing the Declaration of Independence he took greater risks than most of the signers. He risked wealth, high position, even life. Maybe it was his daring patriotism rather than his elegance and money or even his love for her that finally captured his wife, the famous Dorothy Quincy.

John Hancock, like Paul Revere, occupied and made famous a house he did not build. Thomas Hancock, his uncle, built it in 1737. He, too, was a wealthy merchant. Childless himself, he called his poor relative, John, from Quincy to live with him and inherit his wealth. He built a house worthy of his own position and of that of his greater heir. It was the most dignified mansion of the time: a main building of the four-end chimney type, an east wing containing the spacious hall, a west wing for service purposes. A deck, running the length of the main roof, was enclosed by a balustrade. The elaborate central feature was composed of a hooded doorway with French window above, the whole framed with stone. There were stone quoins at the corners and surrounding the windows, and the walls were of cut and dressed granite. It was a solid kind of construction, built to last. More's the pity it was torn down in 1863.



JOHN HANCOCK HOUSE, BOSTON, MASS.
BUILT 1737, DEMOLISHED 1863; CUT STONE

HOUSES IN AMERICA

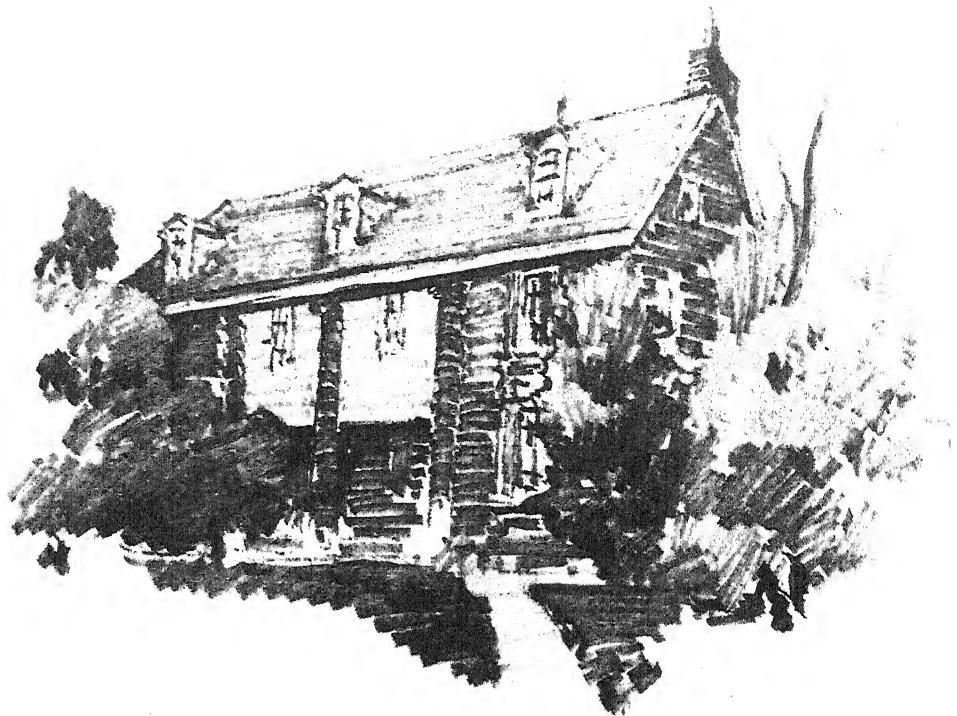
But a noteworthy monument remains: the Bulfinch State House, built in the Hancock cow pasture.

A house is the result of the man who built it, working in his own time and place in the tradition that is his. Tradition is the most conspicuous element. Time and place qualify this as second in importance. The man's own contribution is least obvious of the three. This is true for most houses.

We have a notable exception: the house built in what is now Philadelphia by John Bartram, botanist and Quaker. In his house his own strong personality takes precedence. He painted a character portrait of himself outside and inside, in mass and in detail, without apparent self-consciousness. He forced the large local stones into columns and decorated them in the frames of his windows with patterns little known. He warped the basic English plan to suit his need and taste. Much of the work he did with his own hands, though he was a busy farmer. Buying a one-room house with an attic, he probably began adding to it in 1730, and the last of the various additions which he made were probably finished in 1770. The house is overgrown tenaciously with clustering ivy and rose vines. The effect is "mingled refinement and rusticity—simplicity and stateliness."

The many cupboards and cubby-holes in the house have an individuality of their own. The nine-foot fireplace with its great kettle on the crane speaks of the days when the house was young. They say a copy of the coat of arms of his Norman ancestor who crossed the channel with William the Conqueror hung on the wall. Yet the word-picture of his home given us from an old letter sounds much like a setting for Scott's Cedric the Saxon. The whole household, including children and servants, sat down at the same great table: John Bartram and his wife at the head and at the foot his slaves whom he had freed.

As his house testifies, John Bartram was a self-made man. He pub-



JOHN BARTRAM HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA, PA.
STONE WALLS, INCLUDING COLUMNS

lished the first American Botany. It was authoritative for its time. When he started his study of the subject, he wasn't even familiar with the names of flowers. As he knew no Latin, he bought a Latin Grammar and went to the schoolmaster for help. He began with the casual picking of a daisy. He ended with a distinguished collection of trees, shrubs, and flowers, which he gathered on yearly trips. His love and skill were so great that plants from Canada and Florida (and in between), and presents from foreign lands grew for him in Pennsylvania.

The threatened destruction of this notable garden after the battle

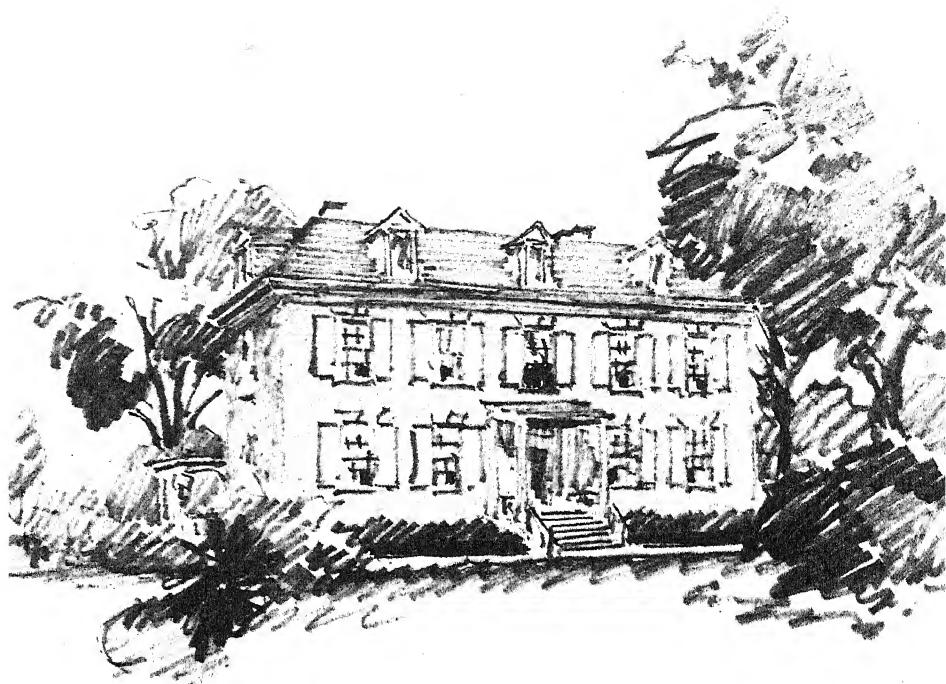
HOUSES IN AMERICA

of Brandywine shocked and killed him. The British, too late to save the eighty-year-old botanist, saved his garden by throwing a guard around it to protect it. Though many changes have taken place, the city of Philadelphia has made it possible for lovers of old things to see both John Bartram's house and his garden.

The present Van Cortlandt House in New York City was not built until 1748. There were two earlier houses. All of them mark a place which was the center of activity from the late seventeenth century through the Revolutionary period and onward. The latest house is a kind of objective monument to the time and place. One Van der Donck was the first owner of the land and the first one to build a house on it. He was also one of the first two lawyers in New Netherlands and had charge of the incorporation of New Amsterdam. He procured a patroonship through Governor Kieft in 1646. It was the only patroonship in Westchester and the first large grant made in that county. He bought the tract from the Indians, with whom he was friendly. The Dutch farmhouse built by Van der Donck disappeared long ago together with the mill he built on Sawmill River. A later mill endured until 1889 and was completely destroyed only in 1901 when it caught fire during a thunder storm and burned. One of the mill stones now serves as a base for the sundial in the garden.

The house erected in 1700 by Jacobus and Eva Van Cortlandt became the center of a self-contained community with the Van Cortlands as the overlords. From it to the city was a journey in those days. So sheep were raised for wool and its products; timbers cut and saved for lumber and fuel; grain was raised, ground, and stored; ham and bacon were cured; seed was prepared; vegetables grown and cellared.

Necessarily all this industry required many helpers and the artisans, cobblers, wheelwrights, carpenters, masons, and other craftsmen or laborers totaled up to a village by itself.



VAN CORTLANDT HOUSE, NEW YORK, N. Y.

The son, Frederick Van Cortlandt, inherited a flourishing plantation, and at once found himself able and willing to build the larger house which, aside from alteration, is the house we have at present. It was built more than a hundred years after Governor Stuyvesant gave up New Amsterdam. The Van der Donck house had been Dutch, the first Van Cortlandt presumably quite strongly Dutch, but this latest house is far and away more English than Dutch. Superficially at least, it is Georgian. The openings in the stone walls are spaced and proportioned with English feeling. The important rooms are English in

HOUSES IN AMERICA

design. But Dutch feeling impregnates the house, cropping out in odd places and especially in the kitchen, which, in location and character, is as Dutch as wooden shoes.

The house is now a museum. Though the original estate has shrunk, even the great city of New York has left an extensive park for this old house to breathe in. Ben Franklin, Medusa, and the devil look out from the window tops on a deep-sunken garden. The porches with their side seats invite you to rest and forget the noisy city. And once inside the two-part Dutch doors, you are in a different world.

Most of the beautiful furniture and living utensils are of the regular colonial type. The Dutch room, however, with its closet-like bed takes one back to New or Old Amsterdam. The ghosts of the old days must rejoice in this fine old estate within the limits of New York city.



SLAVE QUARTERS IN REAR OF A MANSION
CHARLESTON, S. C.

CHAPTER XXXIII

STUCCO

STUCCO didn't come over here first from Italy or even from Spain, as you may have heard. It didn't have to come over from anywhere. It was here to start with. It was in good use by the Indians long before Cortez married Montezuma's daughter. It was here so long ago, that there is no record of when it was first used.

Stucco is not properly a building material at all. It is a finish applied to a structure. Stucco is not of a uniform composition by any means. We think of it rather in terms of plasticity in use. It is applied, a plastic substance, to the surface of a wall to which it adheres, hardening with

HOUSES IN AMERICA

time. In itself it may be anything from pure lime mortar to mud mixed with broken twigs or cut straw. Sometimes it is mixed with color, sometimes color is applied to it, and sometimes it is used as it comes, uncolored except by its own constituents.

It is this last kind of stucco that covered the walls of the pueblos in New Mexico and Arizona. And it is a similar kind that the Spaniards used on the missions of California. No doubt they qualified it in substance and application alike by a knowledge of their own, for they, too, had been working in stucco for a long time. So had the Italians and the French. The French used it in New Orleans, the Spanish in St. Augustine. It was used in Charleston, and the Germans also brought it to this country, so to speak, for it was delightfully used in Wyck. The Dutch used it on Long Island, somewhat on Manhattan Island, in Delaware, and in New Jersey. It was probably employed in all the colonies. The Germans used it in almost pure plaster form in Pennsylvania.

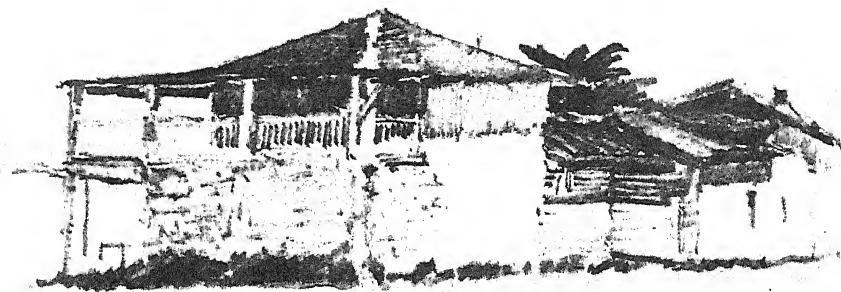
The characteristics that inhere in stucco, or that may be given to it, are value, color, and texture. You can have it light or dark, of any color in the rainbow, and as rough or as smooth in surface as you want it. Clearly a flexible medium for walls. The only thing it lacks which other materials have is scale. That is, it is all of apiece and not made up of units, as brick or stone walls are—or wood walls, for that matter, with the exception of the matched-board wall, which smooth stucco somewhat resembles. It doesn't possess direction in its own right, but it can be given this characteristic by use of belt courses, grooves, pilasters, and such-like projections or recessions that can be modeled in it.

The qualities it has give it a sufficient reason for being. These, to be appreciated, must be studied on the ground, so to speak. That is, from actual examples rather than from photographs or sketches. The life that is in it communicates itself only by direct contact. Shingles, clap-



CASTRO HOUSE, SAN JUAN, TEXAS
STUCCO MARKED TO REPRESENT STONE

CUSTOM HOUSE AT
MONTEREY, CAL.



boards, brick, or stone can be adequately presented through an intervening medium or suggested by sketch, whether in black and white or color. But not stucco. Very white stucco, clear lime plaster, giving up large and deep shadows in strong sunlight, is something to make a photograph, but the stucco part of the picture somehow takes second place. Yet look at the thing the camera looked at and you get a quality the camera missed. The stucco vibrates, you can see or sense the live mass of it. The hard smooth surface, very fine in texture, white or only delicately flooded with color, reveals this quality more clearly than a surface of coarse texture, dark value or strong, thick or muddy color.

Stucco walls are for warm and sunny climates above all, but successful examples of them are to be found in all climates. And stucco used as bits or patches, as under cornices or on foundations or along walls, is a source of great interest in numerous houses throughout the country.

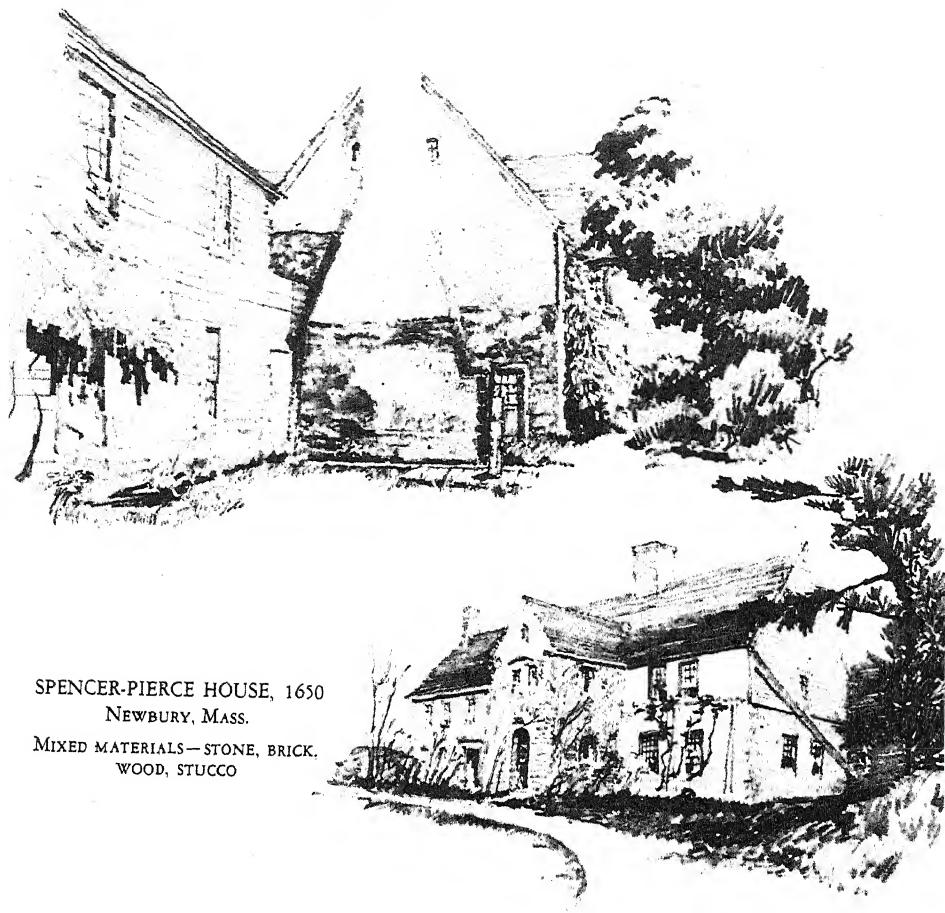
CHAPTER XXXIV

EXAMPLES OF MIXED MATERIALS

THE Spencer of the Spencer-Pierce House built it sometime near 1635 and the Pierce bought it in 1651. Another Pierce, Franklin (the President), visited it years later when it had passed from the possession of his family. For it was sold in 1778 to one Nathaniel Tracy, who was wealthy and given to owning houses. He had a town house in Newburyport on State Street; a farmhouse with farm in Medford, and he owned the famous Craigie House in Cambridge. But of all, he liked this old farmhouse best. It was to this he clung when in 1786 he met financial disaster and had everything else sold from under him.

Tracy was another of the comparatively few "gay dogs" of the early New England and our first authorized pirate. He built ships—which is a natural and easy route into piracy, and his opportunity and *début* came with the Revolution. He outfitted the first privateer and launched it forth to its patriotic depredations in 1775, the first of a fleet to garner a yield of one hundred and twenty vessels. He lived, like Hancock, in luxury and grandeur, kept high-bred horses and elegant coaches, was addicted to reading with a fine library to answer to his needs, and his house was the meeting place for dignitaries of the land. His wife, after Tracy's death, sold the property to Offin Boardman, who, continuing the tradition of the former occupant of the house, acquired merit through the capture of a British transport as it sailed into Newburyport harbor.

The house is built of granite, bonded with other kinds of stone and with brick, and the exterior surfaces are overlaid with a heavy coat of plaster. The walls are two feet thick, a solid structure. During the



SPENCER-PIERCE HOUSE, 1650
NEWBURY, MASS.

MIXED MATERIALS—STONE, BRICK,
WOOD, STUCCO

Pierces' time, part of the town's supply of powder was stored here. This fact, well known, may account for the best story connected with the house. "One of the family slaves, a Negro woman, went up to her room and placed a lighted candle near one of the kegs of powder. Tired, she fell asleep. The candle burned down, fell over, and ignited some powder. A blinding flash, a thunderous noise, an unearthly yell, and

WYCK HOUSE, FROM 1690, GERMANTOWN, PA.
(below) NORTH OR GARDEN SIDE (right) SOUTH SIDE
MIXED MATERIALS—STONE, PLASTER, WOOD



the Negress flew out the window and landed, safe, in the top of an apple tree." It is a true story, for the tree, like the house, is still standing, so they say.

Wyck was not originally one house but two, facing each other across

HOUSES IN AMERICA

an Indian trail. One part was built in 1690, the other about 1700. They were joined together in the middle of the eighteenth century, a broad, through hallway with second story and roof connecting the two parts.

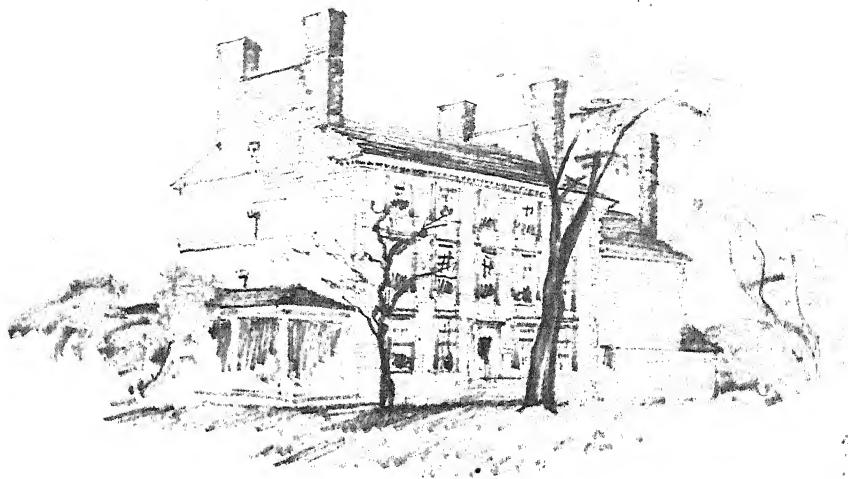
It is constructed of trap rock irregularly laid up, and, except for one end, the surfaces are heavily plastered. One side is covered by lattice and along the other runs a kind of skeleton piazza, both framework for vines.

Its history includes its use as a hospital after the battle of Germantown and a great reception to the Marquis de Lafayette when he revisited this country in 1825.

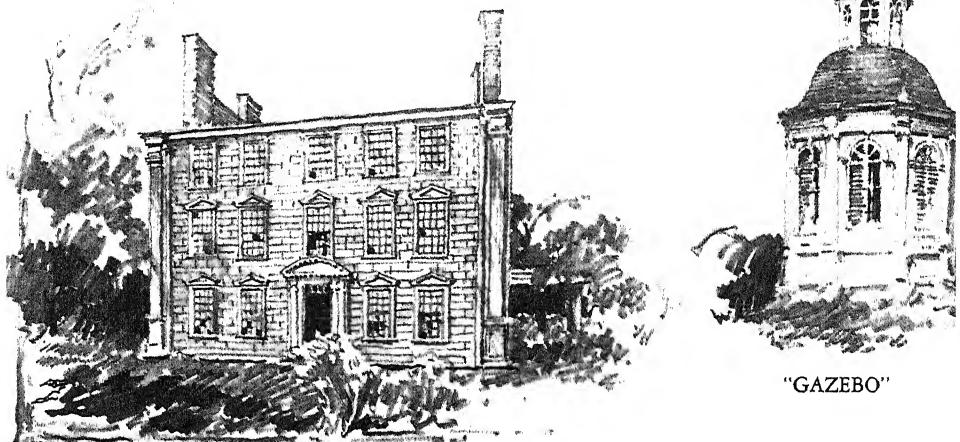
It is the oldest house in Germantown, famous for its many old buildings, and it is the home of descendants of the family that built it.

The Royall House in Medford, Massachusetts, remarkable in and for itself, is noteworthy also for the story it tells, its history, which can be read like a book by the expert visitor with little or no help from the custodian. The original estate has shrunk from the five hundred acres that it was to the less than one acre that it is, but the history is not impaired by the contracted acreage. The buildings tell the story.

The present building is not the original one, but it is contained within the walls. (Today, also, we alter, enlarge, or modernize our old houses, but the changes are seldom if ever entirely successful. We attack them at best as artists and antiquarians: our efforts are toward restoration.) This alteration was directly due to the new owner's increased living requirements, an active creative principle. The original was a brick house, two and a half stories high, two rooms to a floor, one each side of a wide hall, and dormers in the attic. This, like the land on which it stands, was probably owned in the middle sixteen hundreds by Governor John Winthrop. After being enlarged by a lean-to on the west side, it was bought in 1732 by Isaac Royall, who owned a large plantation in Antigua. It was "enlarged and embellished" for him, and



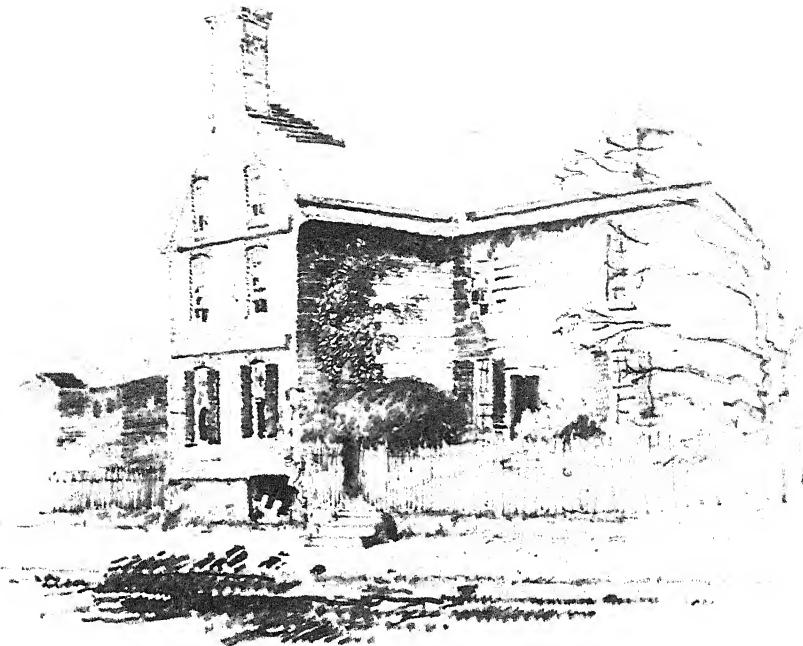
BRICK ENDS, CLAPBOARDS FRONT AND ELL



WEST FRONT

PINE BLOCKS SIMULATING STONE FOR WALL FRONT
A SMALL PART OF THIS HOUSE WAS BUILT IN 1631

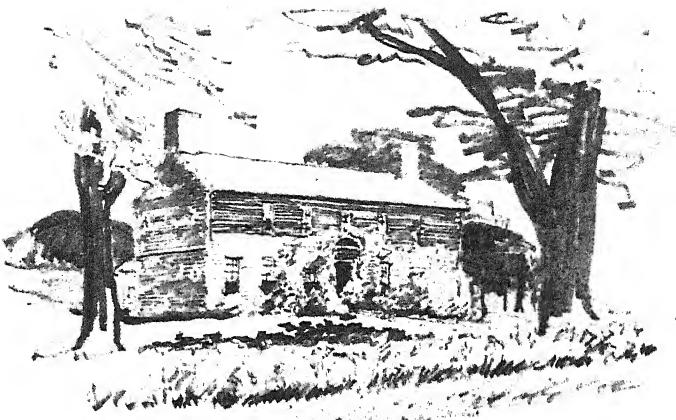
ROYALL HOUSE, 1732, MEDFORD, MASS.



BRICK AND WOOD HOUSE, ANNAPOLIS, MD.

for him, too, the summerhouse was built and the old slave quarters were enlarged to house his twenty-seven slaves.

The new (and present) plan was made cleverly to contain the old one. The two-floor plan became a four-room-floor plan, and the hall was extended through the house and a new third floor was added, thus making a three-story house. The front wall of the old house became, when raised, the front wall of the new house. The original rear wall had already become a partition wall when the lean-to was added, but now the low lean-to wall was raised to match the front wall. On the south end the form of the original one-chimney gable is still clearly discernible where the new two-chimney gable is built around it. Both fronts are covered with wood finish, the entrance front with clapboards, the garden front with siding, cut to simulate stone blocks. The windows



SHORT HOUSE, NEWBURY, MASS.
BRICK END, TWO-CHIMNEY PLAN

of the street front are tied together vertically by wood panels, a design motive new to this country.

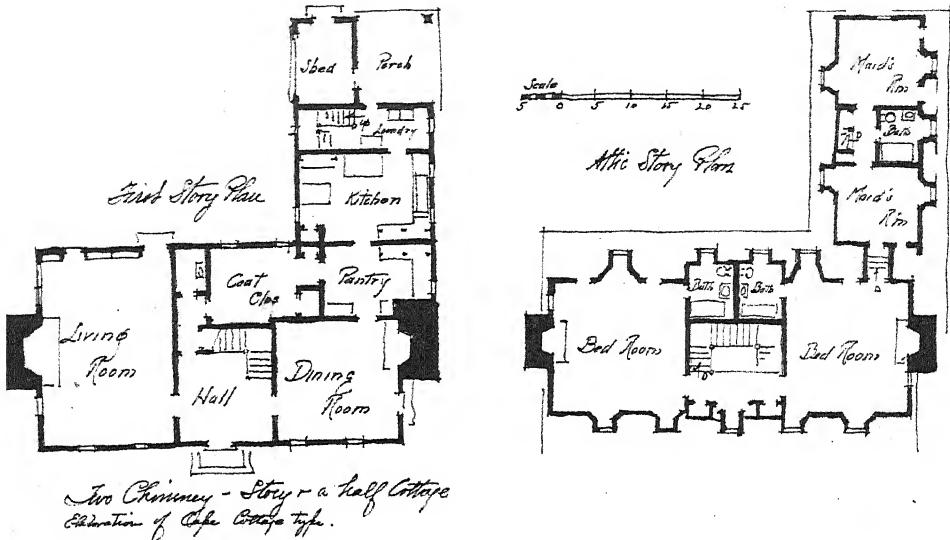
The interior is elaborately but appropriately finished in pine, now painted. Much of the exquisite carving is said to have been done in Antigua. The stair rail is one solid piece of walnut. The carved newel post contains in itself the three designs used in the three varieties of balusters. The upstairs hall is very lovely and like the lower one extends through the house.

Old mulberry Dutch tiles face several of the fireplaces. Among the quaint Bible ones are Cain slaying Abel, Jonah and the whale, Mary and Joseph fleeing into Egypt. The state bedchamber, said, of course, to have been occupied by George Washington, has much carving and in one wall two deep alcoves with window seats.

Like many of the preserved old places, the Royall House is full of interesting furnishings, some of them original. The implements of service of the time are to be found in the fireplaces. There is a tavern

HOUSES IN AMERICA

sign hung in the kitchen, the usual British bullet holes showing clearly in it. The quaint stair to the roof is still intact, from the top of which Molly Stark watched the evacuation of Boston. A portrait of Isaac Royall, Jr. hangs above an ancient desk in the north parlor, representing him as a young man of aristocratic features adorned with a legal-looking wig which befits the donor of the money that founded the Royall professorship of law, the beginning of the Harvard Law School.



*Two Chimney - Story & a half Cottage
Elevation of Cape Cottage type.*

CHAPTER XXXV

MODERN PLANS

WE have today so many artificial ways of achieving comfort, we often fail to take advantage of the natural ones.

The old fellows didn't do this. It may have been due to other characteristics, too, but common sense was a leading one, helped out by necessity. They had to make nature do all they could for them. They placed their homes to get the most of sun and breeze and to make the most of lot or land. Maybe they considered view somewhat. Certainly they did in the South where living was a luxurious and leisurely business. Many of the Northerners were greatly overworked. They didn't have time to look at the view, even if they believed it not ungodly to do so. Put another way, view was a subjective possession with them.

HOUSES IN AMERICA

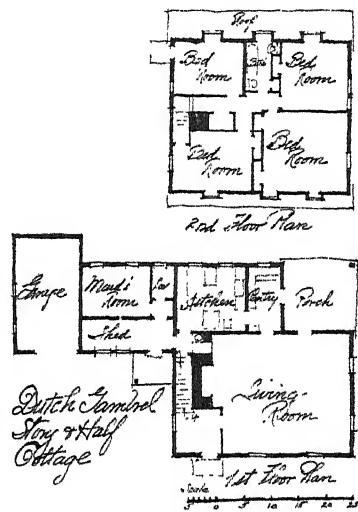
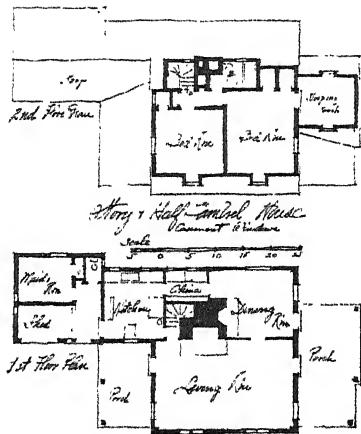
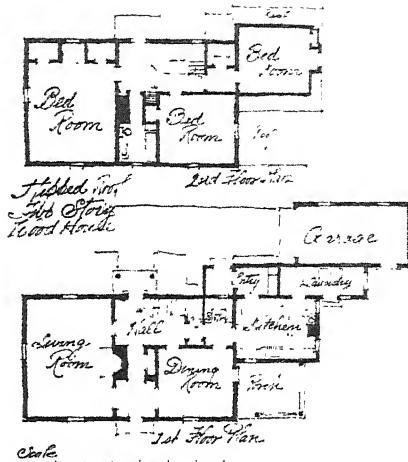
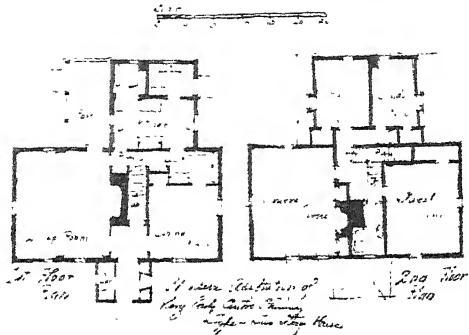
They lived with it as a part of themselves, as a peasant lives with the earth. But North or South or in between, the early settlers placed their houses strictly by the requirements of a practical and genuine way of living.

We moderns (so we call ourselves) have a tendency to live too much with our eyes on our neighbors, and, conversely, with our neighbors' eyes on us. We put piazzas on the street along with the front door and the living room of the house. The front piazza is a concession to curiosity, and a confession of a lack of self-sufficiency. We have to keep our eyes occupied with outside interests. Otherwise we have no interests. We haven't any inward eye left and very little bliss in solitude. The front door is only a kind of putting our best foot foremost. And for the same reason in reverse, we object to a kitchen, scullery, garage, and so forth on the street.

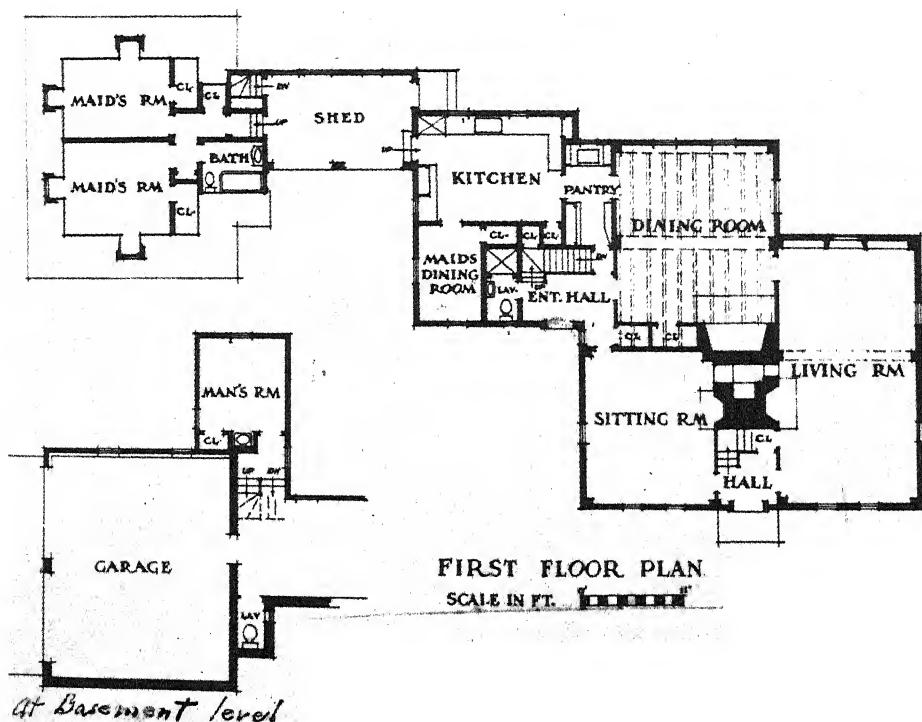
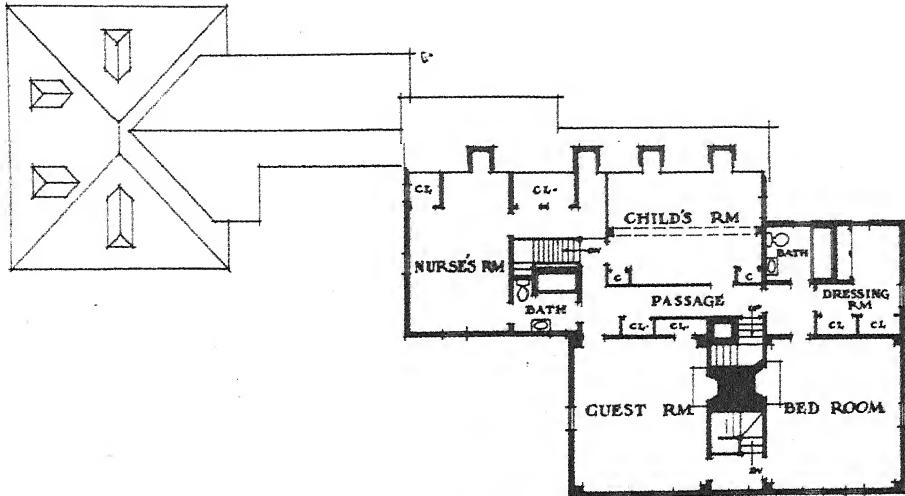
Inside the house, the rooms are no longer self-protective. A room was a room in the old days, every room a room, self-contained and preserving its own integrity. Now only too often a room is just an alcove, big or small, off some other room. We cut off the whole of a wall between rooms and the plan of a house becomes just one big room of irregular perimeter. We no longer have a hall or passage because the entire house is passage. We are not on our way, ever, from room to room, but wherever we are we are floating, like the furniture. A hall used to be, and even now sometimes is, the hinge on which we swing from room to room about a house. It should be a convenient passage-way containing the necessary wall space, the stairs, the necessary doors, and so forth.

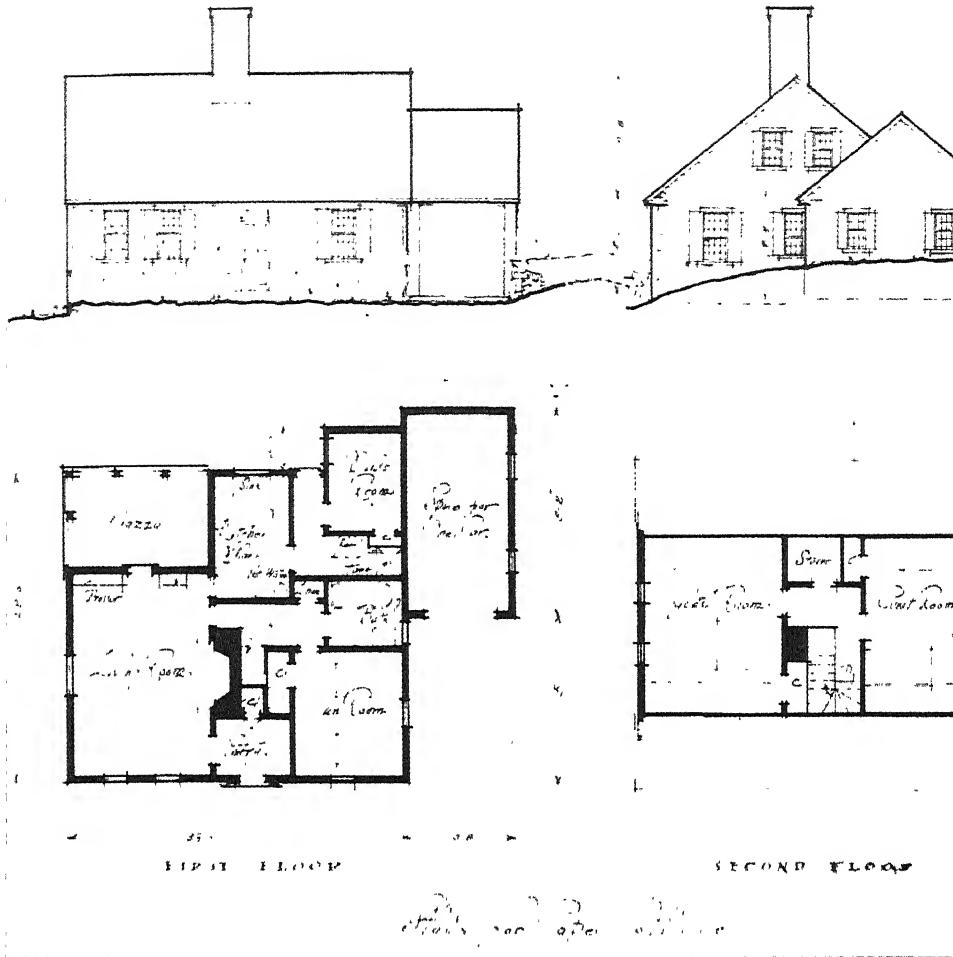
The bedroom floor or portion of the house has not been so loosely handled as the ground floor, since we still retain a desire for some personal privacy, or object to hearing our relatives snore.

All of which, of course, is an exaggerated statement. We do, indeed,



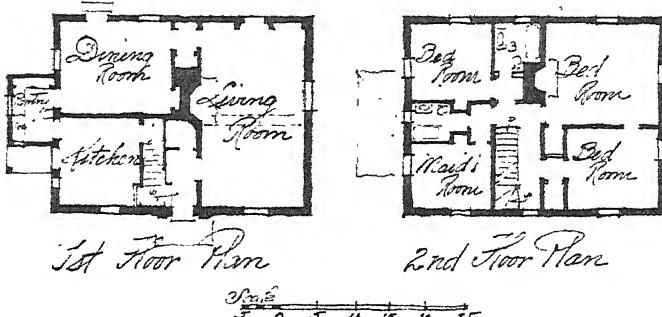
have modern houses that are well placed to sun and air, well set in their surroundings, well planned for living purposes, and with rooms that can be recognized as such. Even so, the tendency to substitute our artificial habits for essential ones remains, and the houses show it.





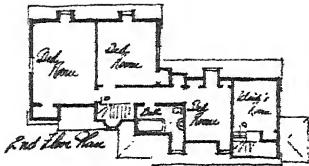
The proper study of a plan for any family begins with a study of the family itself, as a group and as individuals. We know this in a hazy way, but the knowledge needs to be recognized and underscored to be well employed in practice. This sort of group self-knowledge is not so easy to achieve, but knowing that such a thing exists as related to a house plan, we have taken the first step toward achieving it.

*Two Story Brick Small House
Estimate Hinged 100*

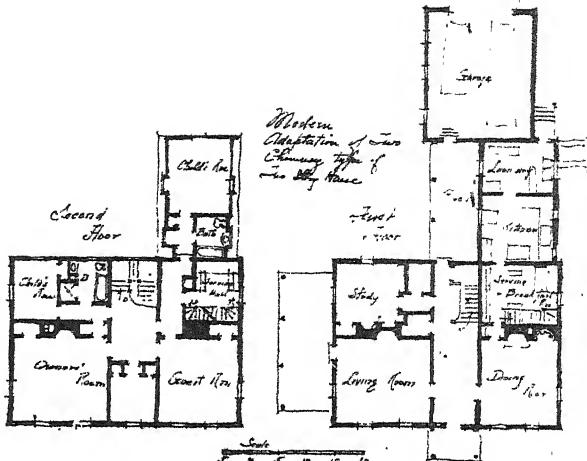
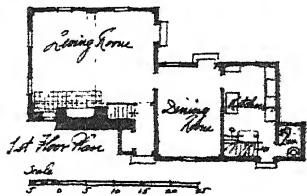


With this in mind, take three kinds of rooms: living room, dining room, bedroom. Offhand, we think these rooms define themselves by their names, but who is doing the living, the dining, the sleeping? Your living room is not like mine, is it? Why not? What makes the difference? Look at the rooms, for a moment, from the point of view of ownership. The living room belongs to everybody, the dining room to nobody, the bedroom to a single person or possibly to two persons. Yet the everybody, the nobody, and the single person of your plan are not the same as the everybody, the nobody, and the single person of mine.

Grant that the living room belongs to everybody, how is this ownership to be expressed? That's the problem. When properly solved the answer is simple: everyone enjoys living there. We have all seen living rooms that are avoided by one or more members of a family. There is almost always a boss in the family and often a boss without judgment. The boss enjoys the room because like as not she (or he) planned it, furnished it, decorated it. Yet the boss will not be entirely happy, he can't be, unless the other members of the family are happy, too. The job is not to exert control, but to discuss the family common denominators of habits and tastes and practical judgments.



Dutch Colonial Cottages
Story - a half



Any family boss does least harm "exerting personality" in applying it to the dining room. The dining room is the least personal room in the house, not even excepting the hall. If you can eat in peace and comfort there, you have small desire to complain. In it you consider the kind and number of probable guests almost equally with the family. It is a room of entertainment. We show off considerably in the dining room, putting our best foot forward, as with the front door. It is large if we entertain many, small or family size if we entertain few. Formal if we give formal parties, informal if we don't. Pride contributes largely to the plan and general character of the dining room, and the family boss is usually competent to express a pride satisfactory to the entire family.

A bedroom is a person's own room. It is not merely a place to sleep. In it, a person ought to have as nearly as may be what he wants, beginning with size and exposure and ending with the pictures, if he wants them, on the wall. No boss ought to be allowed to interfere with the bedroom of any member of the family.

Of course volumes could be written on plan, but it boils down to this: a good plan takes best advantages of sun, air, and view, as well as other practical details. It makes the most of the lot or land where the house is placed, all the time taking into consideration the judgments, tastes, and idiosyncrasies of the family members whose home it is to be.



MODERN HOUSE, MOUNT VERNON TYPE

CHAPTER XXXVI
MODERN HOUSES

THERE are many good houses being built in this country today, but modern houses as a rule suffer from too little observance of traditional qualities and from too wide a choice in selection of materials. This leads to error in two directions: inappropriateness and lack of simplicity.

The good houses are simple. All good things are simple. Simple things are easy to look at and restful. We never get tired of bread and salt as we do of sweets. Yet the simplicity of one kind of house is not the simplicity of another kind. You mustn't expect a half-timber house built of ells and bays and gables, that resembles a small rugged moun-

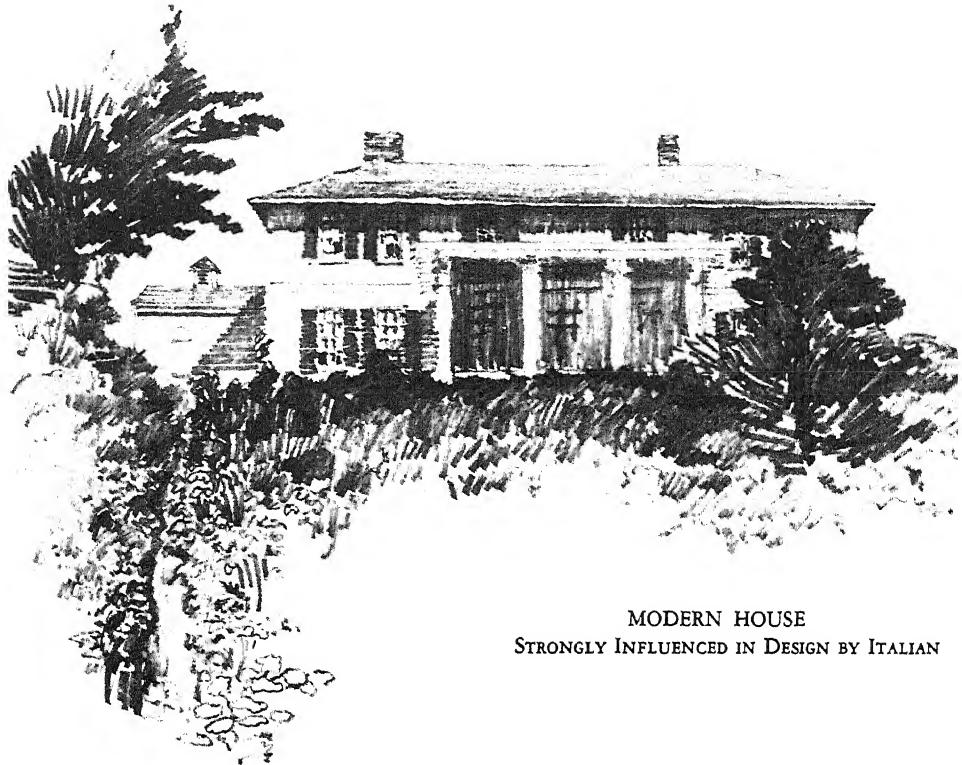


MODERN AMERICAN, SHOWING ITALIAN INFLUENCE

tain with foothills, to look simple in the same way that a white-painted wood farmhouse does.

The elements of simplicity can be separated and defined, but they total up to this, unity of effect. The house as a whole is all of a piece. All the parts, whether of mass or details, contribute to the general appearance.

Styles of houses, too, are almost as abundant as materials. How many we run down depends on how widely we travel. We know a whole family who spent a winter in the Swiss Alps, and who came home wanting to build a Swiss chalet. We know a woman who studied dancing in Spain, who came back with a Spanish villa in her heart. We



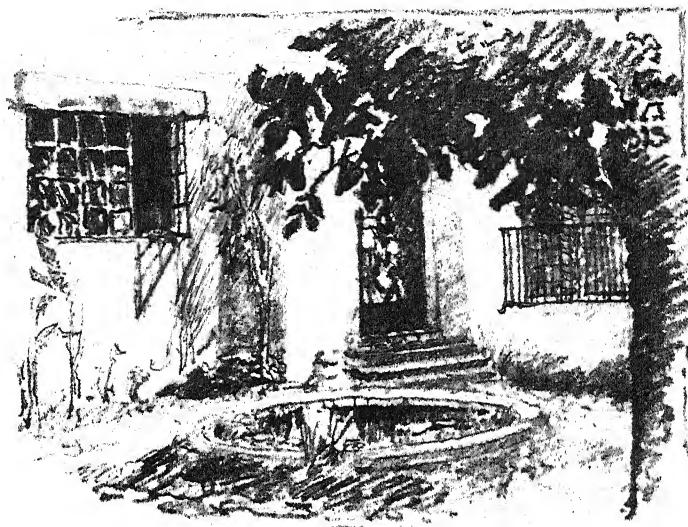
MODERN HOUSE
STRONGLY INFLUENCED IN DESIGN BY ITALIAN

know a young man who was quartered in a French château during the War. He got married and decided to build his bride a castle of strong Norman strain. We know a couple who went artistic and wanted a roof like a water color by Ross Turner—the color given to the designer as a “mossy-gray-green-brown.” And we know a lot of people who have wanted houses weird and strange, unrelated to themselves and to their country.

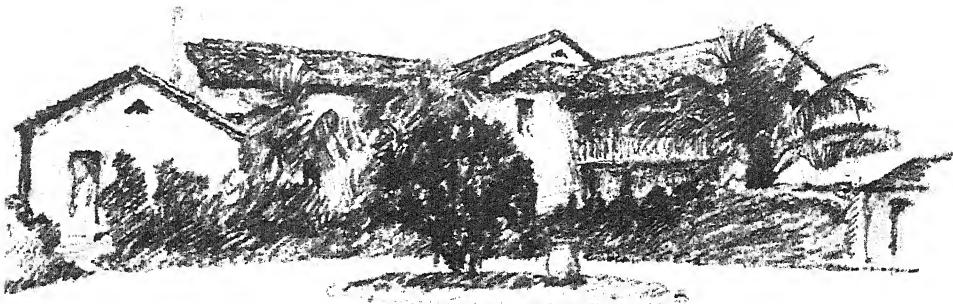
Now you can't make yourself Swiss or Spanish or French by spending a few months in one of these countries. You can't plant a really foreign house in this country and expect it to take root and grow. It will never have the breath of life in it. It may be a seven-days' wonder to the ignorant, but sooner or later it is just a laugh—or a tear. It is no real



SKETCH OF SPANISH AMERICAN (MODERN) HOUSE FROM CALIFORNIA



MODERN PATIO DETAIL

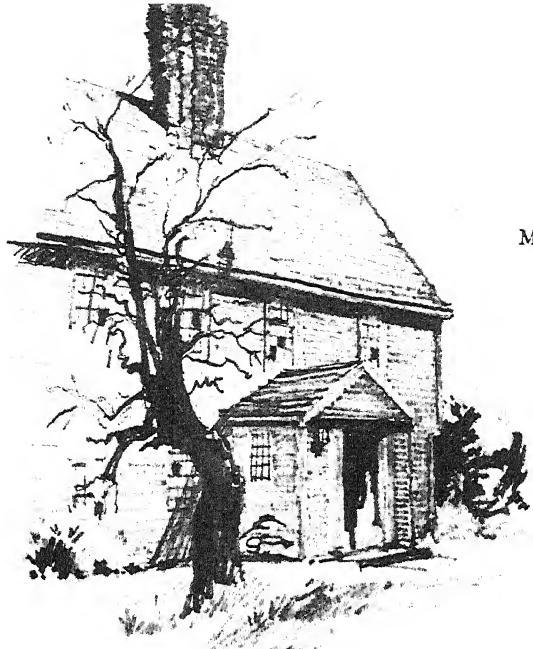


MODERN SPANISH HOUSE, FLORIDA

part of your tradition or your country's tradition and is only a dead limb of an imported tradition.

On the other hand, many nations in the beginning days contributed to the basic English tradition of the thirteen original colonies. You'll find houses strongly French in New Orleans. However, the Spaniards went beyond any of the other nations. They settled only the parts of the new country that were similar to Spain, and they combined the advanced Aztec architecture in Mexico and the Indian methods and designs in California and the Southwest with their own. Naturally this is the basic tradition for that part of the country. In Santa Fe, Indian and Spanish arts, never lost, are being revived. Spanish tradition is asserting itself vigorously in California and in Florida.

Many of us are going modern English in our houses. This ought to be a reasonable thing to do. Our tradition is basically English. But examine our current examples and at the same time examine the English prototypes. You will find a great difference in quality. As usual with imitations, we have taken salient characteristics, maybe of mass, maybe of detail, and exaggerated them; even, in many cases, burlesqued them. We have, seemingly, a particularly strong affection for the unusual, and we don't hesitate to seize upon some bizarre characteristic, a natural



MODERN ADAPTATION
OF VERY EARLY
TYPE OF HOUSE



MODERN ADAPTATION OF CAPE COTTAGE TYPE
BUILT IN PENNSYLVANIA

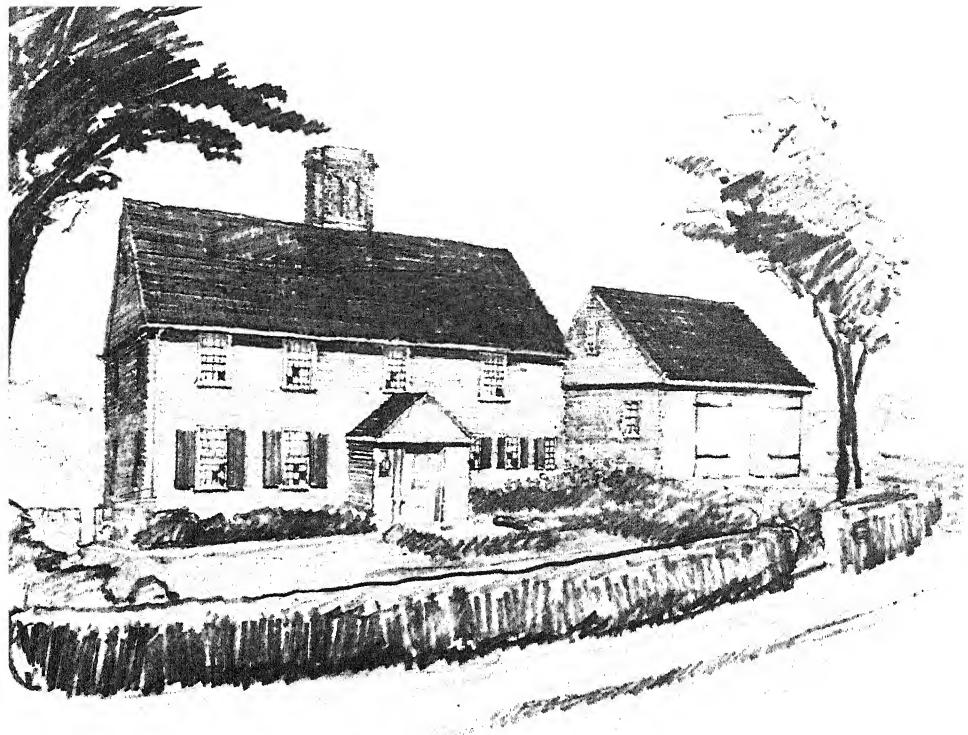


MODERN SUBURBAN HOUSE, MODELLED ON LATE COLONIAL TYPE

enough thing in its own place and time, and misapply it here—a wart on a nose.

Most of our English country houses that dot the suburbs are nothing but imitations. They are not indigenous to the soil. They are affectations with us—artistic, intellectual, or maybe social. On a lower plane, they are the bait of the commercial promotor who builds them wholesale to catch the minnows traveling in the wake of the whale.

Standardization is a great enemy of tradition of any kind, and so of good houses. You can't do good houses by the yard or the dozen. Yet we are trying to do a lot of them that way. They look like a cemetery



MODERN EXAMPLE OF WEATHERED PINE, SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY TYPE

with headstones all alike. Vast housing propositions, even when they are conceived as self-supporting communities and well done according to village or town patterns, are merely academic records, contributing nothing to the development of our domestic tradition: because the individual occupants have had no part in planning their own homes. Unless a family fights its way in, there is no life in a house. The family is the special nails and clapboards that give it individuality. There are no individualizations in any group of community houses. They are all alike. They are built first and passed round afterwards like slices of cake at a picnic. It is a great spiritual and artistic waste, and quite

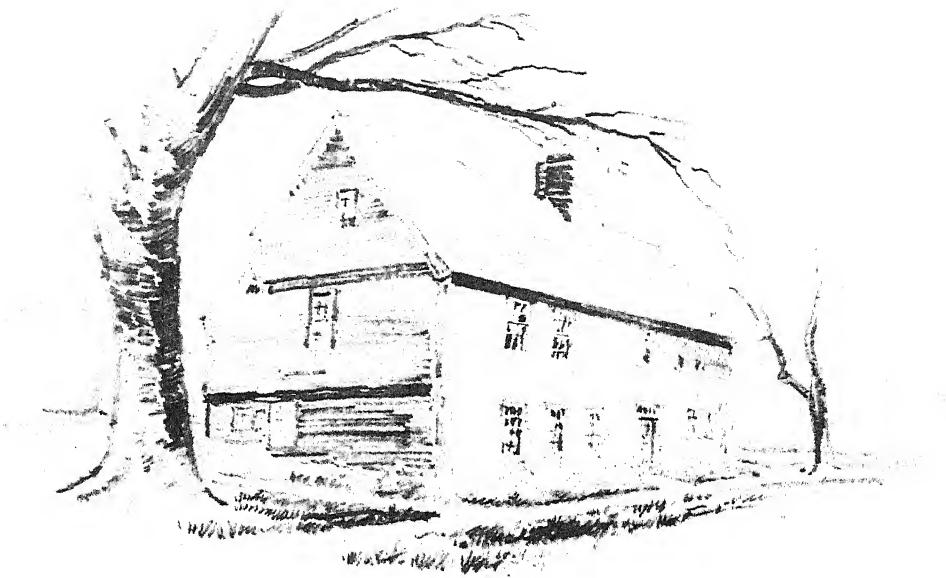
MODERN HOUSES

unnecessary, due to the overemphasis placed by a modernistic civilization on the practical side of life.

We are a large country of many people, all of us living in houses, imitation houses, or excuses for houses, and it is to be expected that our methods of commodity production will continue indefinitely to extend themselves to houses. We can't change a country-wide habit by legislation for the benefit of art. Art, of all forms, has to stand on its own legs. Fortunately it can and does. Every man wants to be an artist in the making of his own home, and many men succeed. The houses that the artists build, of whatever tradition or mixture of traditions, are genuine contributions to domestic architecture. They will persist and be of influence in proportion as they have their roots in our native soil.



MODERN SPANISH WROUGHT-IRON GATE, TEXAS



STUDY OF THE WHIPPLE HOUSE, IPSWICH, MASS.; BUILT 1650
ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS HOUSES IN NEW ENGLAND

CHAPTER XXXVII
HELPFUL HINTS

“**B**EST” families have the best of things, or so they say, but they don’t always have the best houses. Often they haven’t been educated in houses, and so may size up a house something like this: “How many rooms has it and is it built of the finest materials? How much did it cost and is it located on a ‘best’ street?”

None of these things, nor all of them together, can make a bad house into a good one. Also, you can build a good house without having any

HELPFUL HINTS

of these things. One room of common materials that cost very little and is lost in a wood may be a very good house indeed.

It is a recognized fact that most of the houses built in this country during the first two hundred years after settlement were good. The wonder goes round—why? We can do bad houses today and not half try. Are we less intelligent than our forefathers? Do we lack their taste? Or is it that we just don't care?

Life in the old days was simpler in every way. Soon after the first settlers arrived, artisans trained in their home methods of building followed. After the fire of London in 1666, quantities of small books containing studied plans and instructions for building were printed in England. These gradually found their way to the New World.

The old fellows followed the pattern, the tradition, because it was all they had to go by. They found or made only those materials that helped them do it best. Take for example roofing materials. These consisted traditionally of thatch, slate, and tiles.

Wood was overwhelmingly abundant. When thatch became recognized as a very great fire hazard in the new country, they invented a sort of oversized shingle, called "shake." Made by hand, the large crude product was easier to manufacture. When sawmills were set up and they began to saw the shakes, the product was made in smaller units of differing sizes, approximately the shingles of today.

These materials—thatch, slate, tiles, shingles—had the characteristics which gave interest and character to the roofs. The builders couldn't do a bad roof, because all the materials in use were good whether they knew it or not.

But consider our case today. We look for material to roof our house, and what do we find? A plethora of riches, only the riches are of kind and number, not of quality. We don't have any trouble at all in finding bad materials. They are not bad practically, as a rule; they wouldn't

HOUSES IN AMERICA

be salable if they were. However, a lot of them are bad æsthetically. They are bad in their absence of character or bad in the kind of character they have. They may be smooth, dull, dry, and generally uninteresting; or they may be crude and garish in color or with design elements affected to the point of vulgarity. We quickly find ourselves in a swamp and no direction marked.

It is the same way with all other building materials, whether for inside or outside of the house. Of course we find ourselves even more completely swamped when we try to select a style or a house from the thousand and one kinds.

The general character of a given house may suit us right down to the ground and yet it may be made up of inappropriate parts. Or we may see one or more separate parts, like them, and accept the house on the strength of them. Many people have made the mistake of buying a house or a cottage that didn't suit them and was not appropriate to their way of living, because they fell in love with a front doorway covered by rambler roses.

The sentimental appeal is a dangerous one to trust, especially when confined to parts. It is not always a front door that we fall in love with. Sometimes it is a whole new style of architecture, and the style may be as inappropriate to us as a cocked hat and doublet and hose. And so it goes.

As a starting point, of course, we have to find the house that appeals to us. We all can sympathize with the old lady who made the phrase: "I'm no cricket, but I know what I like." The difficulty is, will you continue to like it? It is not like choosing a gown, a season's success or failure. A house is a gown you may wear by choice or necessity all your life. It is important to get a good fit and right materials to start with.

There is only one safe way of choosing a good house and that is to

HELPFUL HINTS

know a good house when you see it. The best way to know a good house when you see it is to have a lot of good houses at the back of your head to compare it with. A hundred houses may all be different from each other, but they all have in common the essential things that make them good. These things get together, like a common denominator in your mind, and tell you what's good without your knowing it. It's like your appetite. If it's cultivated to like good food, it doesn't like bad food. If you have looked at enough good houses or enough pictures of them, you won't care for any other kind.

So we have to know, ourselves, the good from the bad, the appropriate from the inappropriate, or know someone who does and who is willing to help us.

The American Institute of Architects through its small-house service bureau is doing constructive work along this line. The Institute recognizes that not all people who want good houses can afford to hire architects to design them. It desires to supply such people with the necessary plans and specifications at a cost within the reach of anyone who can afford to build a house at all. It asks its members to supply these plans to the bureau, and accepts as payment, instead of the usual commission, a royalty on the sale of blueprints made from the plans. As a result, the bureau has on hand a great number and variety of excellent small-house designs available to the individual builder. From them he can choose that which is, in his own opinion, best suited to himself.

This gives him through his exercise of choice a relatively appropriate house. It benefits the Institute by raising the general level of quality in houses, and by scattering the identical houses like plums in a pudding throughout the length and breadth of the land, instead of concentrating them like beads on a string, as is monotonously true in the community plan.



THE AUTHORS' HOUSE, HINGHAM, MASS.
BUILT ABOUT 1720

CHAPTER XXXVIII~

CONCLUSION

There's a great deal of nonsense written about self-expression, and houses, as a means, get their full share of it. All the magazines tell you how to do this or that by way of expressing the color of your aura. A whole new language has sprung up to give novelty in giving voice to the subject. A lot of people get swamped in the language. Some, estimating the subject from the welter of language, pooh-pooh the whole business. Others, the more judicious, find some fire back of the smoke. For there is something in it.

Every human being is somehow and somewhat different from every other. We all have twice four fingers and two thumbs, but our fingers are never quite alike. The work of our hands varies toward individuality, at least as much as our finger prints do, and our handiwork is more emphatically ours in proportion as we are interested in it.

If we are interested in anything, we are interested in our houses. When we build or superintend the building of them, we mark them with our prints—physical, mental, psychic, æsthetic—which belong to us alone. We do this in terms, materials, methods, ideas, words that have been in use a long time.

Here's a good thing to remember when you build your own house. Your house is a picture of you, and only you can sit for the picture.

INDEX

- Acoma, 12
Adobe, 11; houses, illustrated, 28-9, 32; in mission building, 30
Alaska, 29
Albany, N. Y., 44
Alvarez, explorer, 16
Amazons, 13
America, discovery of, 6; oldest house in, 14
American Builder's Companion, The (Benjamin), 126-7
American Institute of Architects, 231
Andover, Mass., early house, illustrated, 95
Annapolis, Md., houses, illustrated, 69, 208
Anne Arundel County, Md., houses, illustrated, 73, 179
Antigua, 206
Appalachian Mountain Club, 148
Appropriateness, 150-2
Architect or Practical House Carpenter, The (Benjamin), 126
Architects, first, 121-8
Arizona, 13; brush and sod hut, illustrated, 10; cliff dwellings, 12; early missions, 28-9; stucco in, 200
Attics, 141-3
Augusta, Me., capitol, Bulfinch, 125
Aztec influence, 223
Balboa, Vasco Núñez de, 6
Balconies, 34
Baltimore, Lord, 26, 50, 73
Barn, Pennsylvania, illustrated, 67
Bartram, John, 194-6
Bartram House, 194-6
Beacon Hill, Boston, Mass., 83
Ben Hur (Wallace), 21
Benjamin, Ashur, 120, 125-8
Berks County, Pa., German houses, 65-6
Bethlehem, Pa., 61-5
Bienville, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne de, 38-40
Block, Adriaen, 44
Blockhouses, 76-9
Boardman, Offin, 203
Bond, 174-8; English, illustrated, 180; in stone, 187
Boone, Daniel, cabin, illustrated, 144
Boston, Mass., houses, illustrated, 101, 118, 193; illustrated (Revere's picture), 71; State House, Bulfinch, 125, 194
Boston Latin School, 122
Boston Transcript, 80
Brandywine, battle of, 195-6
Brick, 178-80; Cradock House, 80; examples, 181-4; imported, 111; New York houses, 52
Bridges, covered, illustrated, 139
Broad Street, New Amsterdam, illustrated, 49
Brooklyn, N. Y., Bergen Homestead, illustrated, 51
Brothers' House, Bethlehem, Pa., 62
Brush and mud huts, 9
Brush and sod huts, illustrated, 10
Brush huts, 9
Builder's Guide or Complete System of Architecture, The (Benjamin), 126
Bulfinch, Charles, 122-5
Bulkhead, illustrated, 135
Byfield, Mass., Dummer house, 109-11; illustrated, 116
Byrd, Evelyn, 182
Byrd, William, 182
Cabeza de Vaca, Alvar Núñez, 7
Cabins, log (*see Log Cabins*); wooden, in Quebec, 36
Cabot, John, 6, 45
Cabor, Sebastian, 6, 45
Cabrillo, explorer, 8-9
Calhoun, James, 21
California, brush and mud huts, 9; early exploration, 7-8; early missions, 29-33; Spanish American modern house, illustrated, 222; Spanish in, 28-35; stucco in, 200; Yankee house influence, 34
Cambridge, Mass., Craigie House, 203
Canada, early French settlement, 36-40
Cape Cod, house in Dennis, illustrated, 171; old house, illustrated, 169
Caroline, Fort, 9
Cartier, Jacques, 8, 36
Casements, leaded, illustrated, 97
Casimir, Fort, 56-7
Castro House, illustrated, 201
Cattle run, illustrated, 139
Cave dwellings, 12-3
Champlain, Samuel de, 8-9, 21, 36-8
Charles II, 49
Charleston, S. C., 70, 73, 200; slave quarters, illustrated, 199
Chesapeake Bay, 26-7
Chester County, Pa., German houses, 65
Chimneys, 83-4, 87-90; illustrated, 88-9
Christina, Fort, 55, 57

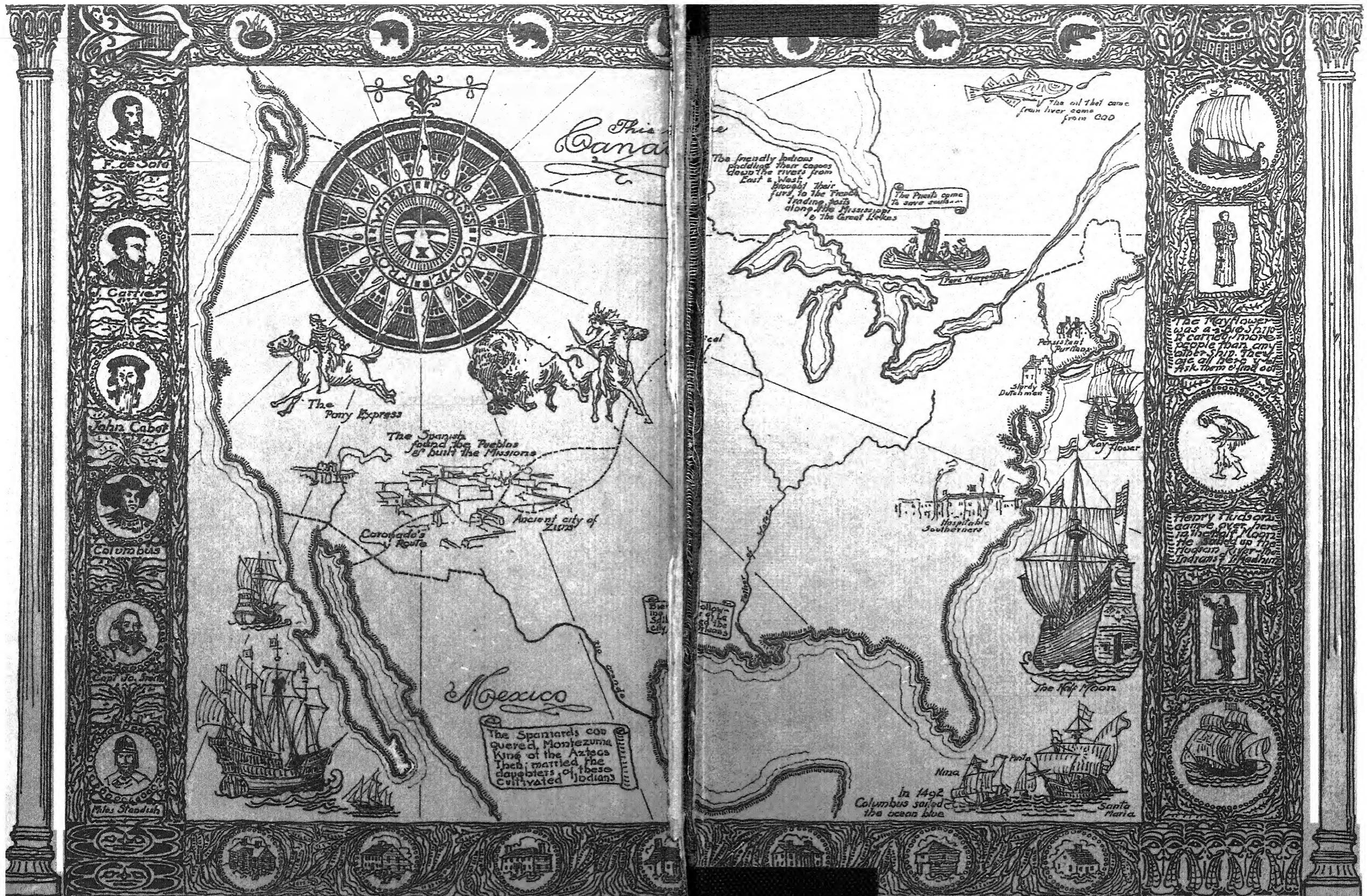
- Christina, Swedish queen, 55
 Churches, 27, 57–8, 182
 Cobola, Seven Cities of, 10
 Civil War, 21
 Clapboards, 158; illustrated, 162–3, 207
 Cliff dwellers, 12–3
 Cliff palace, illustrated, 11
 Closets, 143
 Colonial architecture, 121–8; modern model from, illustrated, 225
 Color, in brick, 174; in stucco, 200; in walls, 153–4
 Colorado, cliff dwellings, 12
 Colorado River, 12
Columbus, 125
 Columbus, 6, 28
 "Concord," Mississippi Spanish governor's residence, illustrated, 33
 Confederates, in New Mexico, 21
 Connecticut, 18, 44, 48–9; chimneys, illustrated, 88–9; country houses, illustrated, 102; early house, illustrated, 92; entrance doorways, 97–8
 Copley, John Singleton, 192
 Coronado, Francisco Vásquez de, 7, 10–3, 20, 29
 Cortez, Hernando, 6, 14, 199
 Cupboards, 142
 Cupolas, 138, 170
 Cypress, 156
 Dado, 168–9
 Danbury, Conn., doorway in museum at, illustrated, 98
 Danvers, Mass., houses, illustrated, 114–5, 166
 Dayton, O., oldest house, illustrated, 152
 Decks, 111–2, 137–8, 192
 Dedham, Mass., Fairbanks House, illustrated, 91
 Delaware, 48, 55, 200; smoke house, illustrated, 135; spring house, illustrated, 135
 Delaware River, 24
 Design, in stone work, 188
 De Soto, Hernando, 8
 Detroit, Mich., 76
 Direction, 154, 176
 Doors, Dutch, 139; witch, 143
 Doorways, 97–8; Massachusetts, illustrated, 126; New England, illustrated, 107; Portsmouth, N. H., illustrated, 123
 Dover, N. H., Damme garrison house, 79; garrison house, illustrated, 81
 Drake, Sir Francis, 8, 16, 32
 Dudley, Joseph, 109
 Dummer, Governor, 109
 Dutch, colonial tradition, 43–54; Swedes and, 56
 Dutch house, illustrated, 50
 Early Houses, 91–8; examples, 99–104; modern adaptation, illustrated, 224
 East Greenwich, R. I., well-head, illustrated, 136
 East India Company, British, 43
 East India Company, Dutch, 43
 East Marion, L. I., shingle detail, illustrated, 163
 Eaves, 38, 66
 Eliot, M., Frost garrison house, 78
 El Paso, Tex., 18
 English, 8, 43–54; colonial tradition, 69–75
 Entrances, 97–8
 Estufa, 12
 Exeter, N. H., Gilman garrison house, 80
 Façades, in New Orleans, 41
 Farmington, Conn., woodwork details, illustrated, 160
 Fear, Cape, 8
 Ferdinand, king of Spain, 28
 Firebacks, 142
 Fireplaces, 88–90, 194
 Florida, 6–7, 9, 20–1
 Forts, 25–6, 58, 76, 78
 French, 8, 29; colonial tradition, 36–42
 Gables, 51–2
 Gage, Thomas, 116–7
 Garçonne, 40–41
 Garrison houses, 76–82; illustrated, 77, 81–2
 George III, 182
 Georgia, 60, 62, 73
 Germans, colonial tradition, 60–8
 Germantown, Pa., 60, 66–8, 206; Wyck House, 200, 205–6; –illustrated, 205
 Gibbons, Grinling, 164, 169
 Gila River, 12
 Glass, 26, 40, 95
 Gloucester County, Va., Fairfield, illustrated, 184
 Granada, Spain, 28
 Gravesend, L. I., 72
 Gray, Robert, 125
 Guilford, Conn., Whitefield House, illustrated, 191
 Gustavus Adolphus, 55, 60
Half Moon, 8
 Half-timber construction, 93–5
 Hancock, John, 191–4
 Hancock, Thomas, 192
 Hartford, Conn., 48
 Harvard College, 122
 Haverhill, Mass., garrison house, illustrated, 81
 Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 99
 Hide hut, illustrated, 10
 High Bridge, Ky., Boone cabin, illustrated, 144
 Hingham, Mass., Andrews-Lincoln garrison house, 80; authors' house, illustrated, 232; Ship Church, 138
 Hints, 229–32

- Holland, 8; colonial tradition, 43-54
 Hollander, Peter, 55
 Holmes, Oliver Wendell ("Last Leaf"), 113
 Hoods, pent, 66
 Hooker, Thomas, 72
 Hooper, Robert, 114-7
 Howe, William, Viscount, 184
 Hudson, Henry, 8, 44
 Hudson's Bay, 44
 Huguenots, 9, 14, 71
 Hutchinson, Anne, 72
 Huts, illustrated, 22, 149; New England, 23;
 Virginia, 23; (*see also* Brush huts, Hide hut,
 Mud huts)
- India, northwest passage quest, 8, 36, 44
 Interiors, finish, 105-7, 119-20
 Ipswich, Mass., Whipple House, 165; illus-
 trated, 228
 Iroquois, long houses, 9-10; illustrated, 10
 Isabella, queen of Spain, 28
 Italians, early explorations by, 6, 8
- James II, 50
 Jamestown, Va., 8
 Jefferson, Thomas, 128, 171, 174
 Joint, in brick, 174, 177-8; in stone work, 188
 Joliet, Louis, 37-8
- Kansas, Spaniards in, 8
 Kearny, Stephen W., 21
 "Keel Cape," 8
 Kentucky, Lincoln birthplace, illustrated, 147
 Kieft, Governor, 48, 51, 72, 196
 Kinsessing, now in Philadelphia, 55, 57
 Kitchen apparatus, 132
- Labrador, discovery of, 6
 Lafayette, Marquis de, 58, 171, 206
 Lancaster County, Pa., German houses, 65
Land of the Pueblos, The (Wallace), 21
 La Salle, René Robert Cavelier de, 37-8
 "Last Leaf, The" (Holmes), 113
 Later houses, 105-7, 119-20; examples, 108-18
 Latrobe, architect, 125, 128
 Laudonnière, René Goulaine de, 9
 Laurel, Md., Garden house, illustrated, 75
 Lee, Jeremiah, 168
 Lightning rods, 112
 Lincoln, Abraham, birthplace, illustrated, 147
 Logan, James, 183-4
 Log cabins, 38, 57-9; illustrated, 57, 144,
 147-9
 Logs, in garrison houses, 79-82
 London, great fire, 173, 229
 London Company, 8
 Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 104
 Long houses, Iroquois, 9-11; illustrated, 10
 Long Island, 45, 200; Payne House, illustrated,
 169
 Louis XV, 40
- Louisiana, 42; plantation house, illustrated, 40
- Macphraedris, Captain, 111
 Macphraedris, Mary, 112-3
 Magellan, Fernando, 6
 Maine, chimneys, illustrated, 88; McIntyre gar-
 rison house, 80
 Manhattan Island, 23-4, 44, 47, 155, 200
 Mansions, English, 69-70
 Marblehead, Mass., 114-7; Hooper House, il-
 lustrated, 114; Lee Mansion, 167-70; —illus-
 trated, 159
 Marblehead Historical Society, 170
 Marion, Fort, 15-6
 Marquette, Jacques, 37-8
 Martha's Vineyard, Mass., cottage, illustrated,
 100
 Maryland, 26-7, 73; "Homewood," illustrated,
 173
 Massachusetts, 8; chimneys, illustrated, 88-9;
 village house, 113
 Massasoit, 72
 Materials, 153-6; mixed, examples, 203-9
Mayflower, 71, 171
 McIntyre, Samuel, 125
 Medford, Mass., 53, 173; Cradock garrison
 house, 80; Royall House, 84, 164, 206-10;
 —illustrated, 207
 Medford Historical Society, 80
 Menéndez de Avilés, Pedro, 14, 16-8
 Mennonites, 60
 Mesa Verde, Colo., 12
 Mexico, 6, 13
 Mexico City, 8, 18
 Minuit, Peter, 46-8, 51, 55-6
 Missions, Spanish, 28-32; illustrated, 31
 Mississippi River, 8
 Mobile, Ala., 76
 Modern houses, 219-27; illustrated, 219-27
 Monroe, James, 171
 Montcalm de Saint-Véran, Louis Joseph de,
 headquarters, illustrated, 37
 Monterey, Cal., 33; custom house, illustrated,
 201; garden gate, illustrated, 35; mission,
 illustrated, 31; Sherman's headquarters, il-
 lustrated, 30
 Montezuma, 11, 14
 "Montpellier," illustrated, 75
 Montreal, 8; Château de Ramezay, illustrated,
 37
 Moody, Deborah, 72
 Moors, in Spain, 28
 Moravians, 60
 Moravian Seminary, illustrated, 61
 Mortar, 178
 Mount Vernon, 167
 Mud huts, 9
- Naamans, Del., Robinson House, illustrated,
 58
 Nantucket, Mass., houses, illustrated, 97

- Napoleon, 42
 Narváez, Pánfilo de, 6-7
 Nassau, Fort, 55-6
 Natchez, Miss., governor's residence, illustrated, 33
 Nazareth, Pa., 61
 New Amsterdam, illustrated, 44
 Newbury, Mass., Short House, 84; —illustrated, 209, Spencer-Pierce House, 203-5; —illustrated, 204
 Newburyport, Mass., 203
 New Castle, Pa., 57, 117, 173
 New England, 8, 18, 26, 71-3; chimneys, 87-90; doorway, illustrated, 107; double wood house, illustrated, 112; overhanging upper story, 96-7
 New Hampshire, 8; chimneys, illustrated, 89
 New Jersey, 45, 48; stucco in, 200
 New Mexico, 12-3, 18-21; early missions, 28-9; stucco in, 200
 New Orleans, La., 38-42, 76; stucco in, 200
 Newport, R. I., Vernon house, illustrated, 155
 New York, 8, 44-54; first European shelters, 23-4; Van Cortlandt House, 196-8; —illustrated, 187, 197
 Normandy, 36
 Norsemen, 6, 8, 22
 North Carolina, Moravians in, 65
- Oglethorpe, James Edward, 73
 Oldest houses, 14-21; Dayton, O., illustrated, 152; Pennsylvania, illustrated, 59; Salt Lake City, illustrated, 147
 Oñate, Juan de, explorer in New Mexico, 14, 18
 Orange, Fort, 45
 Oven, Pennsylvanian, illustrated, 67
 Ovenetiern, 55
- Paint, 98
 Panama, early explorers, 6
 Parris Island, S. C., 14
 Pastorius, German immigrant leader, 60
 Patios, 33, 41; modern, illustrated, 222
 Patroons, 46-9
 Payne, John Howard, House, illustrated, 169
 Penn, William, 24, 55, 73-4, 173; House, illustrated, 95
 Pennsylvania, chimneys, illustrated, 89; half-timber work, illustrated, 92; modern Cape cottage, illustrated, 224; stone work, illustrated, 189; stucco in, 200
 Peralta, Pedro de, 18-20
 Peru, conquest, 6
 Philadelphia, 24, 45, 60, 66, 74, 173, 200; Bartram House, 194-6; —illustrated, 186, 195; Morris House, illustrated, 172; Penn House, illustrated, 95; Stenton, 182-4; —illustrated, 183
 Philip, Indian king, 166
 Philippine Islands, 6
- Piazza (*see* Porches)
 Pierce, Franklin, 203
 Pike, Zebulon M., 21
 Pilgrims, 8, 71
 Pine, 98, 156
 Pizarro, Francisco, 6
 Plans, 83-6; modern, 211-8
 Plantation house, Louisiana, illustrated, 40
 Pocahontas, 8
 Ponce de Leon, Juan, 6
 Porches, 140; Ashur Benjamin, illustrated, 124; Massachusetts, illustrated, 126; Virginia, illustrated, 74
 Portsmouth, N. H., doorway, illustrated, 123; Macphraedris-Warner House, 111-3; —illustrated, 110
 Printz, Swedish governor, 55-6, 60
 Prometheus, 83
 Providence, R. I., 72
 Pueblos, 11-3, 200; Zuñi, illustrated, 13
 Pumps, illustrated, 53, 134
 Pusey, Caleb, House, 55; illustrated, 59
- Quakers, 60, 72, 74
 Quality, comments on, 229-32
 Quebec, 21, 36-8; Montcalm headquarters, illustrated, 37
 Quivira, 13
- Raleigh, Sir Walter, 14
 Ranch house, Salinas, illustrated, 34
 Reading, Pa., 66
 Refrigeration, 133-4
 Revere, Paul, 83; Boston pictured by, 71; house, 104; —illustrated, 101
 Rhode Island, 8; chimneys, illustrated, 88-9
 Rio Grande, 12
 Rising, Johann, 56, 58
 Robinson, Col., 58
 Rock Village, Mass., garrison house, illustrated, 82
 Roofs, 36, 53, 111-2; lean-to, illustrated, 169
 Rooms, philosophy of, 212-8
 Royall, Isaac, 206
 Russians, colonizing, 29
- Saddle River, N. J., smoke house, illustrated, 131
 St. Augustine, Fla., 14-8, 200; house in, illustrated, 14
 St. Lawrence River, 8
 St. Louis, Mo., 76
 St. Mary's, Md., 26-7
 Salem, Mass., 72, 116, 173; architectural tradition, 125; garrison house, illustrated, 81; House of Seven Gables, 99-101; —illustrated, 101
 Salem, N. C., Moravians in, 65
 Salinas, Cal., Berend's ranch house, illustrated, 34

- Salt Lake City, Utah, oldest house, illustrated, 147
San Antonio, Cal., mission, illustrated, 31
San Diego, Cal., 30
Sandwich, Mass., old house, illustrated, 169
San Francisco, Cal., 8
San Francisco Bay, 29-33
San Gabriel, N. M., 14-5, 18-20
San Juan, Tex., Castro House, illustrated, 201
San Juan de los Caballeros, 18
San Juan River, 12
San Luis Obispo, Cal., adobe building, illustrated, 28
Santa Barbara, Cal., 30; adobe house, illustrated, 29
Santa Fe, N. M., 18-21, 223; house in, illustrated, 14
Saugus, Mass., Scorch Iron Works house, 103; illustrated, 104
Savannah, Ga., Moravians in, 60
Sawmills, 155
Scale, in stone work, 189; in walls, 154
Secret chambers, 130-1
Seminary, Bethlehem, Pa., 62; illustrated, 61
Serra, Junípero, 30-3
Sherman, William T., headquarters at Monterey, illustrated, 30
Shingles, 161; detail in leaded casements, illustrated, 97; -illustrated, 163; on walls, illustrated, 169
Siberia, 29
Sisters' House, Bethlehem, Pa., 62; illustrated, 63
Slave quarters, illustrated, 199
Smith, John, 8, 69
Smoke houses, illustrated, 131, 135
Smoke rooms, 131
Sonoma, Cal., 30
Sonora, adobe house, illustrated, 32
South Carolina, cabin, illustrated, 149; chimneys, illustrated, 88
South Hadley, Mass., house, illustrated, 120
Spain, 6-8, 45; colonial tradition, 28-35
Spanish, Aztec influence, 223
Spanish, early settlements, 14-21, 40-2; explorations and discoveries, 6-8
Spring houses, 133-4; illustrated, 135
Sradr Huys, New Amsterdam, illustrated, 45
Stairs, 34, 84, 170; secret, 102, 139
Standardization, 225-6
Stark, Molly, 210
Stone, 51-4, 64-6, 185-90; detail, illustrated, 186-7; examples, 191-8; in Dutch houses, 53-4; in German-built houses, 66; in Moravian houses, 64-5; in New York houses, 51-2
Stone work, Monterey, Cal., illustrated, 35
Stoves, Franklin, 112
Stucco, 199-202
Stuyvesant, Peter, 48, 50, 52, 56, 197
Sundials, 138-9
Sweden, colonial tradition, 55-9
Taos, N. M., pueblos in, 11
Tepee, illustrated, 10
Texas, 29; modern Spanish gate, illustrated, 227
Texture, in stucco, 200; in walls, 154
Thornton, Dr., architect, 128
Tinicum Island, 55
Tortuga, 16
Town houses, 70; illustrated, 103, 172
Tracy, Nathaniel, 203
Tulip Hall, illustrated, 73
Turner, Ross, 221
Turnstiles, 137
United States, California trade, 32; Louisiana purchase, 42
Upland, Pa., 55; Pusey House, illustrated, 59
Upper stories, overhanging, 96-7
Upping blocks, 137; illustrated, 138
Utah, cliff dwellings, 12
Utensils, 141-2
Valley Forge, Pa., Washington's headquarters, illustrated, 95
Value, in stucco, 200; in walls, 153
Van Brunt House, illustrated, 43
Van Cortlandt, Eva, 196
Van Cortlandt, Frederick, 197
Van Cortlandt, Jacobus, 196
Van Tienhoven, secretary, 23-4
Van Twiller, Wouter, 48
Verrazano, Giovanni da, 8
Virginia, 8, 14, 173; chimneys, illustrated, 88-9; porch, illustrated, 74
Wallace, Lew, 21
Walloons, as Dutch colonists, 45.
Walnut, 156
Warner, Jonathan, 112-3
Wash house, Pennsylvanian, illustrated, 67
Washington, George, 58, 171, 184, 209; headquarters, Valley Forge, illustrated, 95
Water supply, 132
Wayne, Anthony, 58
Weather vanes, 138-9
Well-head, illustrated, 136
Wells, 132-6; Dutch, illustrated, 133
Wentworth, John, 111
Wentworth, Sarah, 111
West India Company, Dutch, 44-9
Westover, Va., brick house, illustrated, 181
Whipple, John, 166
Whitefield, Minister, 166-7
Wigwams, at Jamestown, 23
Williams, Roger, 72
Wilmington, Del., 55
Windows, 26, 36; adobe house, 34-5; case-ment, illustrated, 117; sidelights and louverettes, 142

- Windsor, Conn., 49, 72
Winslow, Edward, 72
Winston-Salem, N. C., Moravians in, 65
Winthrop, John, 207
Winthrop, Mass., Winthrop House, illustrated,
 100
Wood, 155–64; as wall finish, illustrated, 158;
examples, 165–72; in California houses, 33;
in chimneys, 87; in German-built houses, 66
Wood blocks, 164, 167; illustrated, 155, 159,
 207
Woodwork, detail, illustrated, 160–1
Zuñi, pueblos, illustrated, 13



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